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BY

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Author of "Names: and their Meaning," "Manners, Customs,
and Observances," etc., etc.

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PREFACE

DURING the whole progress of this work the author has had in mind only such aspects of Modern London as are not presented by the compilers of the guide-books. Descriptive accounts of churches, public buildings, the Halls of the City Companies, noble mansions, historic thoroughfares and the thousand and one other component features of "the Great Wen" have been studiously avoided. Neither has he concerned himself with those various phases of life amid the madding crowd in the Haunts of Mammon, the Emporiums of Commerce, the Promenades of Fashion and the avocations of the toilers and moilers "Down East" which engage the attention of so many practised penmen. In short, he can truly claim that *A New Book About London* breaks fresh ground. With very, very few exceptions the places of fascinating interest that go to make up these pages are not even mentioned in any similar work. Eloquently though Men About Town and the votaries of Pleasure might be able to descant on the charms of Clubland, the associations of Bond Street and Mayfair and the allurements of Ranelagh and Hurlingham, they would confess a woeful ignorance of everything appertaining to London outside the favoured quarter. Nor is this all. To such of them as are old enough to have participated in the dubious delights of the "night houses," or received first-hand information from their sires of the vocal attractions at the Georgian and Early Victorian Supper Rooms, it may come as a surprise to learn that Evans's, the Cyder Cellars, the Holborn Casino, Hanover Hall, the Argyll Rooms and "Tom Cribb's Parlour" still stand intact, and have undergone but little change in a structural sense since the days of Pierce Egan, Thackeray and Albert Smith. Students of English Literature, too, will be gratified to learn that Will's Coffee House has no more been demolished than the Cheshire Cheese. These are but random examples of well preserved links with Bygone London which the topographers seemingly ignore. A mere glance at the analytical Contents will show the comprehensiveness of the author's design in embodying within the limits of a single volume all that a Londoner spending his holidays in Town, a country excursionist, or a tourist from across the seas might like to know about the Greatest City in the World. Even admirers of the creator or pen-portrayer of countless oddities of human character may learn something new from the section of this work headed "Dickens Haunts and Hostelries." That on "Tavern Curiosities" should be fraught with special interest to good easy men who, like the author, were brought up on the bottle. Whereas all the " Old Houses with a History," and by far the greater number of those embraced in the itinerary " Round the Town," are the original fabrics, the " Historic Landmarks," each also invested with a tale to tell, are such as have been rebuilt. Lest, in conclusion, it might be urged by a chance reader of Pussyfoot tendencies that an excessive grain of alcoholism presents itself in this modest work, the broadminded lover of London, its people and its places, will at once set against this charge the well-known dictum of Dr. Johnson regarding the blessings conferred upon mankind by that distinctly human invention, " a good tavern or inn." Due to his careful avoidance of licensees' names, and faint praise for the liquors that they purvey, the author can justly claim that his dissertation on the memories clinging to familiar " houses of call " is in no way a disguised advertisement.

L. W.

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OLD HOUSES WITH A HISTORY

I

OLD HOUSES WITH A HISTORY

IT is characteristic of the City of London that a stranger may almost instantly escape from the surging throng into a peaceful by-lane where only a subdued roar of traffic falls upon the ear and pedestrians are but few. Or, attracted perhaps by a refreshing glimpse of greenery on a sultry day, he comes to the discovery of a sequestered churchyard nook which affords him a welcome rest amid the twittering of the feathered tribe overhead. These are among the things pleasurably remembered by tourists after their return to distant lands, though for Londoners themselves they scarcely possess a passing interest. Another matter which excites surprise is the absence of conspicuous inns, hotels and taverns in the busiest thoroughfares. In this respect Cheapside differs wholly from the High Street or otherwise denominated main artery of a provincial city or town. With the single exception of the Gog and Magog, its refreshment resorts have to be inquired for, or diligently sought up long, narrow courts ; and the like observation applies to its only hotel—Kennan's.

Were the average citizen asked to indicate the whereabouts of a historic guest-house which, though less than two minutes' walk from the most frequented street in the Metropolis, is so hushed the live-long day that only neighbouring church chimes disturb the pervading silence, and where, until the last few years, for reasons presently to be explained, not even the striking of a match was permissible, he would confess himself sorely puzzled. The great majority of Londoners pursuing their daily avocations within the "one square mile" have never heard tell of the existence of such a place, albeit, as the visitors' book attests, English-speaking travellers the wide world over make it their home while sojourning amongst us on account of the restful comfort to be commanded.

This, I may state at once, is Williamson's Hotel. Hidden away up New Court, in Bow Lane, Cheapside, but a few yards past the open space behind the chancel window of Bow Church, where lovers of the quaint and curious, because not guided thereto by the usual handbook, never could make the discovery for themselves, it has in one slight respect only marched with the times. A printed slip at the entrance to the court and an ornamental tablet at right angles to the doorway now call attention to "The Old Mansion House Lounge." Alike in regard to its luxurious furnishings and the Mayoral memories clinging to the great edifice, this description seems well justified. It is, however, safe to assert that the late "Daddy" Williamson, a lineal descendant of the founder of the hotel far back in the year 1770, would have scouted the idea of any such improvement. Until the present owner took steps to meet modern needs, the commodious apartment stretching along the left-hand side of New Court, which to-day looks so attractive, was the plainest imaginable Early Victorian Coffee Room, with gas jets and wax tapers doing duty for friction matches. These primitive arrangements throughout the hotel were perpetuated by the Williamson family as safeguards against fire, seeing that the ceilings uniformly consisted of canvas tacked on to the bare oak joists. Moreover, business men round about were unable to use Williamson's like Kennan's or any other hotel, owing to the lack of a buffet or bar. The probability is that, though fully licensed, it never will possess one, but under its new *régime* ordinary citizens may now call for drinks and smokes in "The Old Mansion House Lounge" amid the most reposeful surroundings. In "Daddy" Williamson's time, as in that of his predecessors, such was the strait-laced character of the establishment that all secular newspapers and periodicals were removed from the coffee-room on Sundays.

That London's oldest hotel, in contradistinction to an inn, evolved out of the first official residence of the Lord Mayors, should receive no word of mention in the guide-books or any descriptive account of the Great City passes understanding. While authors and journalists have left nothing unsaid about the Cheshire Cheese, this equally ancient and not less noteworthy fabric has been utterly ignored. A survey of its internal appointments would be fraught with much interest. All the rooms, except the new Lounge, contain antique furniture and chastely executed chimney-pieces. Exteriorly, too, the aspect is archaic. Over the principal entrance in the left-hand corner runs a covered gallery. An upper window in the opposite wing wall, otherwise bare, lights two rooms, while, pursuant to old-fashioned modes of construction, several chambers communicate.

Erected within a year of the Great Fire on the site of the house once belonging to Sir John Fastolff, an English General renowned in the French wars, the original of the portly knight of Shakespeare's plays, and who, in all likelihood, himself frequented the Boar's Head Tavern, Eastcheap, where the King William statue now stands, Williamson's Hotel has undergone no material change ever since. In anticipation of the great influx of foreign visitors to the World's Exposition of 1851 in Hyde Park, certain improvements making for increased comfort were carried out ; but, taken altogether, the building remains in much the same state as when successive Lord Mayors occupied it. The present "Old Mansion House Lounge" was unquestionably the ancient banqueting hall. One room stands on the boundaries of the twain parishes, St. Mary-le-Bow and St. Mary Aldermary. It only remains to add that the wrought-iron gates adorned with a gilt monogram at the upper end of the court were presented to the Old Mansion House by William and Mary after paying a ceremonial visit to the City in the course of their reign. As indicating the dimensions of the establishment, which extends along both sides of New Court, its upper floors contain forty bedrooms, with quaint corridors and staircases recalling the age of silks and ruffles when George III was King. Truly a fitting habitation for the Lord Mayors of London Town.

Perhaps if Williamson's Hotel had ever been an inn, with a coaching yard and stables, it would not have escaped the notice of antiquaries. But a short distance from Bow Church, walking westwards, he that has eyes for such things may feast them upon a genuine relic of Old London amid the very din and hustle of commercial life. Two circular plaques at the corner of Friday Street bear this inscription : "The Oldest House in Cheapside. It withstood the Great Fire, 1666." The composition of its outer walls doubtless explains the survival. As a rule, only the mansions of exalted personages were built of brick or stone, but oak carvings frequently adorned the façade.

Within and without this house attests its great age. Unheeded by the thousands who hurry past it every day, the Cheapside frontage displays a Chained Swan, which constituted the badge of Henry IV when Prince of Wales. Two of the windows overlooking Friday Street have much smaller glass panes than the rest. Long before the Great Fire consumed its external ornamentation, as seen in a print of Marie de Medici making a State progress through the City while on a visit to Charles I and his Queen (1638), this once Royal residence had become a tavern famous for the self-consecration, according to popular Roman Catholic belief, of certain Protestant bishops after the passing of Queen Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity (1559). Whatever basis for such a scandal may have existed, it is well established that the prelates concerned met and dined at the Nag's Head Tavern subsequent to the ceremonial. That the venerable pile does not extend further down Friday Street seems strange. In all probability its rear portion was constructed of wood, and so easily fell a prey to the flames. Alike, however, for the archæologist and the student of Church History, this vestige of Tudor London should have a peculiar interest.

Still known as " The Old Mansion House," though its description as such no longer greets the public view, No. 73 Cheapside, facing Ironmonger Lane, affords us a pretty good example of the ornate-fronted and more fire-resisting structures which took the place of those reduced to ashes in the great conflagration. Said to have been designed by Sir Christopher Wren, this was built for the Mayoral residence of Sir William Turner, 1668–9 ; but History is silent as to its occupation by any one of his successors to the civic chair. Being his own property, he no doubt inhabited it during the remainder of his life. The Bow Lane Mansion House, now Williamson's Hotel, must have continued to be the official dwelling of the Kings of the City until the present stately edifice on the site of the old Stocks Market had been got ready for occupation by Sir Crisp Gascoigne in November 1753. Presumably, also, down to that time the lack of a sufficiently commodious banqueting chamber actuated the Lord Mayors to dispense the City's hospitality at Guildhall. But for the conversion of its ground floor into business premises replete with plate-glass windows, the Cheapside Old Mansion House remains practically unaltered.

Mention of civic banquets leads one quite naturally to speak of "Birch's." Familiar though every Londoner must be with the little green-fronted shop on Cornhill, only those directly associated with the famous catering firm would harbour a suspicion that the lower portion of the tall, begrimed brick building stood alone amid the general devastation after the Great Fire, and was actually put up for the express purpose which it fulfils to-day. This may, in truth, be regarded as the common kitchen of the City Guilds. Its cellars, extending far beneath the pavement of Cornhill, present a wondrous array of stoves, from the open fire to the modern range and up-to-date gas-cooker. Usually fifteen turtles, producing six hundred pints of soup, are killed for a Mayoral feast.

Nor is Birch's less celebrated in another way. Ever since the Restoration, when it began to be used by City merchants and Court gallants as a place of meeting and incidental light refreshment, the demand for nourishing soups and toothsome viands has suffered no abatement. Whatever the pre-Fire aspect of this popular rendezvous may have been, it is certain that its richly carved front has proved an alluring feature of the western extremity of Cornhill ever since the rebuilding of the City, and there appears good ground for the tradition that the slightest alteration of the premises would entail the forfeiture of the lease. By way of accounting for the altitude of such an ancient fabric, it should be mentioned that the upper storeys were added during the Thirties of the bygone century, when the senior members of the present Ring and Brymer family inherited the fine property through their partnership with the renowned Alderman Samuel Birch. From the records of the firm of "Birch and Birch," it transpires that one Samuel Horton took over the business in the year 1710. The next item of interest is the succession of his erstwhile partner Lucas Birch, whose son Samuel Birch, born in 1787, besides meriting the sobriquet of "Pattypan" Birch for his famous confections, writing several plays and even aspiring to poetic distinction, rose to the dignity of Chief Magistrate in the year of Waterloo and voiced the citizens' feelings of joy over the fall of Napoleon Bonaparte at the Guildhall Banquet, with the Czar of Russia, the King of Prussia, Louis XVIII of France and the Prince Regent as guests of honour. On this, as on previous occasions, the feast had, of course, been prepared under his own superintendence. After two centuries of daily burnishing the inscription "Birch, successor to Mr. Horton" on the brass door-plates of "The Little Green Shop on Cornhill" has become utterly obliterated.

A grave fault to be found with the topographers of the Great City is their omission to particularize old places where men most do congregate for sociability and restful refreshment. Though nothing new can be said about it, the Cheshire Cheese, in Fleet Street, seemingly affords them the sole surviving example of the Taverns of Old London. In all verity there are others. Take, for instance, what still bears the style of "Ye Olde Watling Restaurant" at the corner of the ancient Roman highway and Bow Lane. This was clearly one of the first houses built after the Great Fire, as a minute examination of its brickwork and heavy joists and beams—part of the original materials—would show. The red-tiled roof inset with attic windows and the whitewashed façade carry us back in spirit to the domiciles of other days. For cosiness and comfort few City taverns always associated with good feeding can match it. A tavern in the generally accepted modern sense "Ye Olde Watling Restaurant" never could have been—that is, if we rightly interpret the conspicuous exordium high over the drinking bar thus worded: "Preliminary Notice.—Every customer taking Alcoholic Liquor at this Counter *must* first be supplied with Food." Such, indeed, is the requirement laid down in the time-honoured licence. Apparently the Gothenburg system has in this instance been anticipated by untold generations.

Another highly interesting old fabric ministering to the needs of the inner man is "Ye Olde Butler's Head" in Mason's Avenue, which runs between Coleman and Basinghall Streets. This has actually descended to us from the year 1616. Its ornate frontage of carved oak presents a vivid contrast to the plain brickwork overhead. Beyond a doubt the well patronized tavern-restaurant of to-day was anciently a mere ale-house, like so many others round the country bearing the same sign. Two years before his death, in 1618, Dr. Butler, the physician to James I, and according to old Fuller "the Æsculapius of that age," invented a kind of medicated ale which became so popular that public-houses named after him, and exhibiting his portrait for a sign, were specially opened for its sale. As the fame of this liquor declined and the doctor himself passed out of memory, fresh signs were substituted, until very few commemorating his existence remained. Accordingly, this one in Mason's Avenue may be regarded as a link with the dim past.

An old tavern much affected by the diamond merchants of the vicinity is the Mitre in the narrow court which connects Hatton Garden and Ely Place, close to Holborn Circus. Its sign consists of a triangular stone displaying a bishop's mitre and the date 1546, set into the house front. This originally adorned the chief portal of the Palace of the Bishops of Ely, which, with its extensive strawberry gardens, was let by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Christopher Hatton, her "Dancing Chancellor." Allusions to the strawberries in the Bishop's garden occur in Shakespeare's *Richard III.* When precisely the tavern was built cannot be determined, but it has certainly stood, just as now seen, for more than three hundred years. A notable attraction in the north-west corner window is the trunk of a cherry-tree, which is said to have borne good fruit in its time on the self-same spot. Adjoining the tavern are the offices of Messrs. Lewis and Lewis, the well-known solicitors.

Business men who take their daily luncheon at the Ship Tavern in Little Turnstile, which runs alongside the Holborn Empire into Lincoln's Inn Fields, have no conception of the part played by this old house in those turbulent times when to officiate at or attend divine service according to the Romish rite constituted a penal offence. In the same long room a priest, under the protection of the Sardinian Embassy on the west side of the Fields, was wont to assemble a limited congregation of the old Faith twice each Sunday by stealth. Entering singly and circumspectly from four different ways, viz. Holborn, Gate Street, Whetstone

Park or Lincoln's Inn Fields—the worshippers called for a mug of ale at the bar and at once passed into the parlour. If, as sometimes happened, the waiter stationed at the door gave a warning sign, the priest sought a convenient hiding-place upstairs, and nothing more incriminating than drinking, smoking and talking declared itself to the emissaries of the State when they looked in. The encircling beer-marks of the mugs may still be seen on the tables preserved as evidences of the protracted struggle in this country for liberty of conscience.

If its walls could speak, No. 285 High Holborn might tell a tale of stirring events in bygone days. Green window-shutters and ornamental scrollwork on the façade seem strangely out of keeping with modern activities on the ground floor. A narrow doorway surmounted by a shell portico gives access to offices overhead. Few Londoners hurrying past it ever associated the late " George and Blue Boar " railway goods receiving depôt with a celebrated " house of call " for gentlemanly malefactors on the way to Tyburn Tree when Holborn bore the designation " Heavy Hill." Down to the cessation of public hangings at Tyburn, after November 7, 1783, fine ladies paid large sums for a window seat at the George and Blue Boar to see a dashing highwayman on his last ride being regaled with a bumper of sherry. The like privilege was also granted to criminal notorieties above the common run. Among such were Earl Ferrers, who in a fit of rage shot his steward (1760) ; Dr. Dodd, found guilty of forging a bond to the value of £4,200 (1770) ; and the Rev. Henry Hackman, the murderer of Miss Reay (1779). The presentation of a nosegay at St. Sepulchre's Church and the last drink at the George and Blue Boar are referred to by Gay in *The Beggar's*

Opera. From the pages of Swift, too, we can cull a grim jest relating to the custom, thus :

> As clever Tom Clinch, when the rabble was bawling,
> Rode stately through Holborn to die of his calling,
> He stopt at the George for a bottle of sack
> And promised to pay for it when he came back;
> And as from the window the ladies he spied,
> Like a beau in a box he bowed low on each side.

Reference to a window in the last couplet would seem to negative the popular assumption that the conveyance was always a rude cart, with the condemned man seated on his own coffin and a chaplain in attendance. We do, as a matter of fact, read of gentlemanly highwaymen and other superior personages stepping from a coach on to the "fatal cart" which awaited their arrival at the gallows. Another distinction in criminal etiquette merits to be noted. Ordinary murderers, thieves, and such like *en route* for Tyburn Tree, St. Giles's Gibbet, or the Mother Red Cap, Camden Town (see p. 195), were driven past the George and Blue Boar and refreshed with a bowl of ale at a tavern traditionally known as The Bowl, now rebuilt as The Angel, adjoining the north-east corner of St. Giles's Churchyard in High Street, Bloomsbury, of to-day. By way of accounting for the general divergence of all traffic from Newgate and Holborn to the ancient Oxford Road just beyond "The Waye to Tottenhall," otherwise Tottenham Court Road, along High Holborn, Broad Street and High Street, it must be mentioned that New Oxford Street is a comparatively modern thoroughfare, cut through what had borne the name of "St. Giles's Rookery" in the year 1847. The same squalid neighbourhood, of which Dyott Street alone remains, figures in Hogarth's prints of "Beer Street" and "Gin Lane." As stated above, the last public execution at Tyburn took place on November 7, 1783. Thenceforward the hangings always took place outside the Debtors' Door of Newgate Gaol in the Old Bailey, until the vigorous denunciations of Charles Dickens caused them to be withdrawn from the vulgar gaze into the Press Yard by a special Act of Parliament on May 29, 1868. The exact site of Tyburn Gibbet is now marked by a triangular brass plate let into the roadway at the junction of Connaught Place and Edgware Road, opposite the Marble Arch.

By all appearances one of the most historically interesting old houses in London has taken up a fresh lease of existence. Standing empty and forlorn all through the war at the corner of Russell and Bow Streets, this begrimed edifice, surmounted by a red-tiled roof and antiquated attic windows, conveyed no hint of departed glory, much though poets and wits and beaux and Men About Town congregated on its upper floors while Covent Garden was the centre of fashion. A German name over the boarded-up shopfront possibly explained the war-time cessation of business activities in connection with market produce on the street level. Within living memory, when clean, curtained windows overhead proclaimed habitation, the daily consumption of boiled beef and carrots at the shop counter met a distinct public want, while dramatic and variety agents abounded in the vicinity and the *Era* office graced the opposite corner. In pre-Victorian days the lower portion of the premises harboured a book and print seller. This seems to have been the usual order of things outside the City wherever social amenities distinguished the upper floors.

Deriving its name from William Irwin, the popular host—another custom of the time—this great literary landmark, next door to the house in which long afterwards Charles Lamb wrote his *Essays of Elia*, enjoyed a world-wide celebrity as Will's Coffee House. Here, for thirty years, until he died—May 1, 1701—John Dryden delivered judgment on new plays and books. He had his own special arm-chair, which no one ever thought of appropriating, in winter beside the fire-place, in fine weather on the balcony overlooking both streets. This balcony is the only portion of the old structure no longer in evidence. Even the door-knocker at the side entrance which alone gave access to the famous rendezvous has been preserved.

By way of contradistinction to other select meeting-places for social, literary or political intercourse, ere clubs in the modern sense were dreamt of, Addison and Steele sometimes speak of Will's as "The Wits' Coffee House." Here Pepys first tasted the new beverage called "Tay." Under date February 3, 1663, he thus writes of Will's in his *Diary*: "In Covent Garden to-night, a-going to fetch home my wife, I stopped at the Great Coffee House there, where I never was before. . . . It will be good coming thither, for there I perceive is very witty and pleasant discourse."

At the age of twelve Pope considered Dryden such a model to be studied, and held the Colossus of Literature in such great veneration, that he prevailed upon some friends to take him to Will's Coffee House. Here Swift framed the rules of the Brothers' Club, and later founded the celebrated Scriblerus Club, with Arbuthnot, Pope, Gay, Oxford and St. John Bolingbroke as principal members. Addison, who became the acknowledged head of the coterie at Button's, across the way, makes this reference to Will's in the first number of the *Spectator*: "There is no place of general resort wherein I do not often make my appearance; sometimes I am seen thrusting my head into a round of politicians at Will's, and listening with great attention to the narratives that are made in those little circular audiences." This was the favourite house of Congreve and Wycherley, the dramatists. Steele, Smollett and Dr. Johnson likewise frequented it, although we gather from Boswell's *Life* that the great Lexicographer gave the preference to Tom's, a few doors further down Russell Street, when he had Garrick for his companion.

Concerning the famous literary rendezvous in its palmiest days, when the nightly presence of John Dryden enhanced its own worthy reputation, Lord Macaulay writes : "Nowhere was the smoking more constant than at Will's, that celebrated house sacred to polite letters. There the talk was about poetical justice, the unities of time and place. There was a faction for Perrault and the Moderns, a faction for Boileau and the Ancients. Under no roof was a greater variety of figures to be seen. There were earls in stars and garters, clergymen in cassocks and bands, pert Templars, sheepish lads from the Universities, translators and index-makers in ragged coats of frieze. The great push was to get near the chair where John Dryden sat. . . . To bow to him and hear his opinion of Racine's last tragedy, or of Bossu's treatise on epic poetry, was thought a privilege. A pinch from his snuff-box was an honour sufficient to turn the head of an enthusiast." As at all similar resorts, Will's was open to anyone of respectable appearance on payment of a penny at the bar, after edging his way through the crowd of beaux who, worshipping Beauty there, obstructed entrance at the stairhead. To cite all the famous names associated with Will's would involve running through the whole gamut of seventeenth and eighteenth century worthies. Despite all this, not a single one of the guide-books to London even hints at the idea of the historic house still occupying its old site. -

The Cheshire Cheese, in Wine Office Court, Fleet Street, has been so much written about that I need scarcely advert to it at all. What a delightful old-world place this is ! Here one can sit in Dr. Johnson's own corner and think of his table-talk with Goldsmith, Boswell and Burke. The sanded floor, oak wainscotings, rough tables hidden by spotless linen, black-handled knives and forks, willow-pattern plates, wax candles (with snuffers), churchwarden pipes, punch-bowls and earthenware beer-mugs distinguish it from every other feeding resort in the Metropolis. Its famous PUDDING of beefsteak, kidneys, oysters, mushrooms, lark and not a few secret ingredients has received its full meed of literary praise wherever the English language is spoken. In the cellars are rich stores of wine kept in magnums. There also may be seen an ancient well, no longer used, and a fifteenth-century doorway, part of the original fabric. As a matter of fact, the vaults themselves belong to the same period. Rebuilt a year after the Great Fire, the house has preserved all the characteristics of a seventeenth-century tavern. And yet many Londoners have never set foot therein, so little do they cherish its honoured traditions ! On the other hand, Transatlantic tourists and provincial excursionists endowed with literary instincts make it a point of duty to visit the Cheshire Cheese at the earliest possible moment.

There are references to " Ye Antient Society of Cogers " in various books, but the fact that its *locale* ever since the Mid-Victorian era, viz. the Barley Mow in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, was the very last of the Mug Houses which flourished in the City and elsewhere down to the death of Queen Anne seems to have been generally overlooked. Originally the term "Mug House" implied one of the great Whig or Tory Clubs, for the reason that the counterfeit presentment of their members' political idol embellished the beer and cider mugs out of which they drank during the heated discussions. As the face was often more grotesque than life-like, this gave rise to the slang phrase "What an ugly mug!" Tavern debaters other than the Cogers' Society have in our day been dubbed "pot-house politicians" relative to the drinking vessels when pewter pots superseded earthenware mugs. Hot work was marked out for the Salisbury Court Mug House in July 1716, after all the others had come to a peaceful end of their existence. The Papists and Jacobites, antagonistic to the Hanoverian Succession, made a most determined attack on the place. Mr. Read, its proprietor, implored them to desist, but as they did not do so, he shot their leader dead on the threshold and then fled to the upper floor, barricading himself in at the stairhead. Thereupon the rioters played havoc with the Barley Mow, drank their fill of beer, allowing the rest to flood the cellar, broke up the furniture, and bore away the sign in triumph. Mr. Read was subsequently tried for murder, but acquitted, while five of the ringleaders were hanged at Tyburn in the presence of an excited crowd.

The suppression of the Barley Mow as a rendezvous for political discussion had a chastening effect upon factious meetings all over the Town. Thereafter it became an ordinary tavern, and the rear portion of the ground floor was given up to singing and "spouting" on general topics. In this sense the term "Mug House" still held good, since the frequenters of a taproom everywhere drank their liquor out of mugs, whose positions were carefully chalk-marked on the tables. As a "Free and Easy" resort the Barley Mow must have been one of the first established in London. Everyone knows how the tavern "Sing-song" developed into the Music Hall with its Chairman and waiters, where for many years the admission money was returned in refreshment, until modern enterprise caused it to make way for the palatial Variety Theatre.

By the present generation of debaters in Salisbury Court, the private house of Daniel Mason, who founded the Society far back in the year 1755 at No. 10 Shoe Lane, is generally thought to have been the original place of meeting. This assumption admits of a ready refutation. It was in a dingy first-floor room of the White Bear Tavern, which stood on the site of the St. Bride's Tavern in Bride Lane for three hundred years, where the earliest Cogers foregathered. When the old house had to be demolished they migrated to Mr. Mason's own residence in Shoe Lane, and raising subscriptions amongst themselves, showed him their gratitude by building a proper Discussion Hall in his garden. Such, however, was the growth of the Society that increased accommodation became imperative as time wore on. In a specially constructed hall at the rear of the new White Bear its members again met each Saturday night for lively debate. Through the Roaring Forties and beyond the Sixties of the bygone century, Cogers' Hall attracted not only staid politicians but confirmed Town rakes put for the nonce on their best behaviour, and students of men and manners. The Discussion Hall at the White Bear vanished many years before the house itself was again razed to the ground for the erection of the St. Bride's Tavern in 1892. Substantial fare is much more the *raison d'être* of a visit to the fine modern structure than are alcoholic potations. The Cogers took their name from the Latin *cogito*, to think deeply, whence we have the verb "cogitate." Cogers' Hall was the precursor of the debating societies, which have now almost died out. Should any of my readers wish to take part in an intellectual duel, or merely look on, a Saturday night visit to the Barley Mow may be confidently recommended. Here the stirring events of the week are discussed in a true sportsmanlike spirit, while strangers receive a hearty welcome. An antiquated house the home of the Cogers certainly is, as one might opine from the scrollwork on its façade.

Although its ground-floor aspect has unquestionably been modernized, the high-pitched red-tiled roof and odd-looking attic windows behind the great signboard surmounting the Nag's Head, 17 and 19 Whitechapel Road, opposite the parish church and not far from the City's eastern boundary, proclaim a quite respectable age. As a matter of fact, this is the self-same tavern concerning which a tragic story of the trial and execution of a poor ribbon-weaver and the untimely death of the landlord, in the year 1661, has been handed down to us. John James, according to a pamphlet published in the days of the Merry Monarch, was a member of the sect known as the Seventh-Day Baptists, and his religious zeal prompted him to preach the Second Coming of Christ in the house he occupied down the adjoining Bulstrode Alley, which still exists. If only on the ground of keeping a conventicle he could not long have escaped from the meshes of the law, but his violent and unguarded language very soon caused the landlord of the tavern to have him arrested. On the sworn information of a journeyman pipe-maker, the poor weaver was solemnly arraigned before the Lord Chief Justice at the Old Bailey for seditious preaching. Great public interest centred in the trial, and in addition to the Solicitor-General and the Attorney-General, no less than four K.C.'s appeared for the prosecution. Consequently the prisoner had no chance whatever. Despite the pleadings of his wife against the death sentence and the efforts of various persons to obtain its remission through the Royal mercy, James paid the last penalty on Tyburn Tree, his head being afterwards affixed on a pole at the entrance to Bulstrode Alley as a warning to sedition-mongers in general and conventicle preachers in particular. Retributive justice, however, speedily overtook the landlord of the Nag's Head, who had been such an active agent in the summary proceedings, for he succumbed to a fit within the next few days.

For genuine timber-and-plaster houses, the actual habitations of merchant princes and other superior persons before the Great Fire, which still betray evidences of their departed glory, one must visit Cloth Fair. Down to the last decade or so this was a charmingly sequestered spot to wander in. Little by little the old is making way for the new. A capital rear view of several such quaint fabrics may be obtained from the Smithfield entrance to the Church of St. Bartholomew the Great, where, in the intervening God's Acre, a certain number of parish widows each Good Friday morning pick up new sixpences from the tombstone of a long-forgotten testator. On the front of one house towards the eastern end of Cloth Fair appear the arms of the Earl of Warwick.

Close by, at the corner of Middle Street, is the Hand and Shears, which, now transformed from a primitive ale-house into a tall brick tavern, has witnessed many stirring scenes in connection with Bartholomew Fair. Here, through the centuries, was held the Court of Pie Poudre, otherwise "The Court of Dusty Feet," for the speedy redress of grievances appealed against by frequenters of the Fair. The business of this tribunal was essentially to grant licences, test weights and measures, and impose substantial penalties on fraudulent traders. Here, too, on the afternoon of the Feast of St. Bartholomew, the Lord Mayor caused the opening of the Fair to be solemnly proclaimed. Established by Royal charter in the reign of Henry I, the Fair originally lasted a fortnight, but was eventually curtailed to three days' duration. Since it happened that the showmen opened their booths and the traders their stalls early in the morning of August 23rd, a company of tailors, each armed with a pair of shears, thought fit to anticipate the civic proclamation still further. Assembling at the Hand and Shears, they elected a chairman and sallied forth into Cloth Fair and its vicinity, as the clock struck the witching hour of midnight, to belabour doors, ring bells and vociferously announce the opening of the Fair, until daybreak. These and other riotous excesses, which year by year became more intolerable, incited the Lord Mayor at last to abolish the Fair altogether in 1855. Thereafter the open sheep and cattle pens in Smithfield—really Smoothfield, where the knightly jousts and tournaments anciently took place—remained undisturbed towards the end of August, and the City Fathers began to formulate their grand scheme for the erection of the Metropolitan Meat Market, which had its ceremonial inauguration on November 24, 1868.

Reverting to Cloth Fair, almost opposite the Hand and Shears stood, until the early days of the European War, a veritable fifteenth-century tavern, "Ye Olde Dick Whittington." But for the demolition of adjoining houses and the consequent insecurity of its foundations caused by heavy day and night market cartage in Long Lane, this might have held together for several centuries more. Its projecting blue-washed stories and quaint interior made a special appeal to the antiquary. The floor was one foot lower than the road level and the tiny back parlour possessed a crazy staircase. Conspicuous objects of interest at the outer roof angle were two human heads of ferocious mien, similar to those which adorn the Star Inn, Alfreton, recalling the gargoyles of many a Gothic cathedral. Within, only the bar-fittings bespoke modernity. Since his theatrical career began with the booths of Bartholomew Fair, where *Every Man in His Humour* was first performed, Ben Jonson must have known " Ye Olde Dick Whittington " well. Immediately behind, and extending the whole length of Cloth Fair to Sun Court, is a narrow dark alley called Back Passage. A restoration of the gatehouse over the West Smithfield entrance to the great priory church within the last few years led to the discovery that loose tiles had been affixed to the half-timbered fabric, which now stands revealed as it was built about the year 1595. This is said to have enjoyed a high repute as a coffee-house while the book trade flourished in Little Britain. The gateway itself belongs to the same period as the church, viz. the twelfth century.

More interesting perhaps than any venerable pile already noticed is the Crooked Billet on Tower Hill. Built for a Royal palace, in direct communication with the Tower by means of a passage leading from the cellars beneath the Moat, and converted into an inn during the reign of Henry VIII, this may justly claim to be the oldest house in London. Moreover, the oak-wainscoted walls in most of the great rooms were provided with secret cupboards and hiding-places. Evidences of such measures for personal safety still declare themselves, notably in connection with a monster wardrobe seemingly built into the walls. Mention must also be made of the richly sculptured ceilings and friezes, the like of which cannot be met with in this country save at Hampton Court Palace. Among other unique examples of its internal embellishment is the earliest representation of the bagpipes extant. Hours might be spent over a minute survey of this grand old inn. To the antiquary there can be no more instructive goal of discovery, though, strange to explain, the guide-books make not the slightest allusion thereto. From its front windows, set in a façade suggestive of great strength, as from the flat roof, a good view must have been commanded of the executions on Tower Hill. Well within the recollection of the oldest inhabitants round about, the present rear saloon of the Crooked Billet was, down to forty-five years ago, a recruiting station for the Tower Hamlets and the oldest established of such places in London. Despite the fact that it disavowed all connection with licensed premises, a kind of hutchway cut in the back of a sentry-box stationed against the wall enabled drinks to be passed through for newly enlisted men.

THE SAME SUBJECT—FURTHER AFIELD

II

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OF the old hostelries in the Borough High Street, only the King's Head and the George have been left to us in a fragmentary form. Not so very long ago there were many more, as the names displayed over the entrances to railway goods receiving depôts—relicts of ancient coaching inn yards—indicate. The Spur Inn, for example, is an anomalous description altogether, since no house of refreshment can be found by a stranger who ventures through the gateway. Adjoining another deceptive inn yard is a modern tavern styled the Blue Eyed Maid. Like the White Hart, its predecessor figures in the pages of Dickens. Readers of *Little Dorrit* will call to mind that Mr. Arthur Clennam rested here awhile one dismal Sunday evening after his journey from Marseilles to Dover and thence by " The Blue Ey'd Maid " Coach, though intending to pass the night at the London Coffee House on Ludgate Hill. In coaching days the lumbering vehicles often bore the names of the inns to which they belonged.

The Tabard, most famous of all London's inns, is now an ordinary public-house, or, to speak reverently concerning its food-fare, an up-to-date tavern-restaurant. From this spot Canterbury Pilgrims were wont to set out along the great Dover road for at least a couple of centuries before Chaucer assembled his nine-and-twenty storytellers under its roof in the year 1383. A fire which involved the whole of the Borough High Street on May 26, 1676, swept away the Tabard, the George, the King's Head, the Queen's Head, the White Hart, and other ancient inns. They were all rebuilt in the same year, but because Mine Host of the Tabard was ignorant of the meaning of the term, which implied the sleeveless coat worn by the heralds, he artlessly changed the name of Chaucer's inn to the Talbot. This accounts for Talbot Yard adjoining. In 1873 the house was again burned down. The restored pictorial sign on its successor is all that antiquaries can now lay store by. The White Hart, of Pickwickian memory, may be dismissed with the statement that it no longer exists.

A curious mixture of the ancient and modern is the King's Head. Along its top story runs a wooden balcony, to which the whole series of crazy little rooms, all communicating, afford direct access. In many other respects the house makes a good claim to antiquity, but it perforce yields the palm to the glory of Southwark, the George. Described on the picture postcards carried away by admiring visitors as "An olde hostelrie of the seventeenth century where good olde English fare is still served as in ye coaching days," this quaint fabric stands without a rival in the Metropolitan area. Only the south portion of the George remains intact, the north and east sides of the inn yard having been appropriated for goods sheds by the Great Northern Railway Company. Viewed from without, a double tier of wooden balconies cheers the eye. The whole place realizes Dickens's description of the coaching inns of Southwark fifty years ago. "In the Borough there still remain some half-dozen old inns which have preserved their external features unchanged; great rambling, queer old places, with galleries and passages and staircases wide enough and antiquated enough to furnish materials for a hundred ghost stories." In respect of the galleries with heavy balustrades and flower-pots, the George is to-day the sole survivor anywhere. Its bedrooms, all leading thereto, contain four-posters and other furniture to match. These are regularly occupied by Kentish farmers who attend the neighbouring Hop Exchange and Borough Market.

A little way down the west side of the Borough High Street, towards St. George's Church, over the arched entrance to Adam's Place, may be observed a commemorative inscription (not mentioned in any guide-book) which runs as follows : " On this site stood the ' Pewter Pot Over the Hoop,' afterwards called the ' Falcon.' Here began the Great Fire of Southwark, 23rd September, 1689, Several Persons being burnt, Destroying over fifty houses, the ' Half Moon,' and part of the King's Bench Prison." Hence it would appear that this portion of Transpontine London has been visited by two destructive conflagrations. To the intense regret of most of the inhabitants round about, the Half Moon can no longer be visited, for the reason that behind its great wooden gates there will shortly arise a modern hotel. Apart from its association with many notable personages, including the Emperor Napoleon III and his son the Prince Imperial, the notorious Parisian beauty Cora Pearl, and Charles Dickens whilst writing the Marshalsea chapters of *Little Dorrit*, this afforded Londoners the only example of a flying bridge across the inn yard. That the Half Moon Inn, like so many other interesting old places, should have escaped the notice of London's topographers seems strange.

Equally beyond the ken of those outside the district is the last vestige of the Marshalsea, to wit, the turret, which, minus its clock face, may be seen from the adjacent Layton's Buildings. After having long been used for the punishment of smugglers and other persons convicted of crimes on the high seas, the Marshalsea became a Debtors' Prison for South London. It extended southwards to St. George's Churchyard, on the boundary wall of which is inscribed, as conspicuously as any Transatlantic pill advertisement, the legend, "This site was originally the Marshalsea Prison, made known by the late Charles Dickens in his well-known work, *Little Dorrit.*" In the churchyard are buried all the unfortunate inmates of the gloomy prison, as well as those of the likewise vanished Queen's Bench. A few doors from the corner of Marshalsea Lane, facing the church, stands a very old house still in the full tide of business activity, while at the other end of the Borough High Street, near the Hop Exchange, is an antiquated stone sign of "The Hare and Sun," let into the front of the Argosy Hotel and Restaurant.

A delightful old place, situate midway on the west side of Camberwell Grove and not far from No. 188, where the late Joseph Chamberlain first saw the light, is the Grove House Tavern, which, largely constructed of timber, and having its every room oak wainscoted, carries us back in spirit upwards of four hundred years. This was originally an isolated mansion, but the builders had provided it with a subterranean passage from the cellars to the Hermit's Cave, at the corner of the present Church Street, and, in the other direction, to a Friary on Denmark Hill. The bricked-up entrances to these communications may yet be identified. Later, Grove House became a noted coaching inn and the haunt of highwaymen, who no doubt made good their escape by the same secret outlets when the Bow Street Runners were after them. Perhaps not all, however. The building over of the extensive grounds attached to Grove House brought to light several skeletons said to have formed the mortal frames of such " Knights of the Road." While the nineteenth century was still young, what bore the name of Camberwell Hall, with its Tea Gardens, adjoining the Tavern and comprised in the same property, enjoyed a high repute for public dancing. Dickens, in his *Sketches by Boz*, describes a ball there, and is locally reported to have been a frequent visitor. An old farce, *Did You Ever Send Your Wife to Camberwell ?* had a direct bearing upon these suburban junketings. Vanished, indeed, have all the *alfresco* resorts of our grandsires and grandams, but the Grove House Tavern and Camberwell Hall remain to fix the location of the most popular in South London.

Itself pleasantly suggestive of rusticity, Camberwell Grove possesses a veritable Thatched House which is the pride of the district. Not less than three centuries old, this was at one time the residence of William Black, the novelist. Within its walls he wrote *Madcap Violet*, making the heroine spend her schooldays at Pelican House, in the neighbouring Grove Park. By way of celebrating the Peace, the ever-alluring domicile received a fresh coat of thatch during the summer of 1919.

A passing survey of their upper storeys, untouched by the modern shop-fitter, would reveal the fact that the High Street, Peckham, contains many ancient houses ; while the Kentish Drovers, at the corner of Rye Lane, may be justly regarded as a historic landmark. When Peckham was a peaceful village surrounded by green fields, this comfortable hostelry had a great repute as the halting-place for cattlemen journeying along the King's highway to and from the London live-stock markets. The annual fair, established, we are told, at the express request of Nell Gwynne, by the Merry Monarch on his return from a day's sport around Brockley and Lewisham, because she had herself performed at a primitive theatre close to the Kentish Drovers, was an event of much importance after Bartholomew and Southwark Fairs had seen their best days. Old magazines contain exhaustive accounts of Peckham Fair, notably *Bentley's Miscellany* for August 1787, from which the following extract may be admissible :

> The general focus of attraction was in the immediate vicinity of the Kentish Drovers, and what a roaring trade did it drive when Flocton's Fantoccini and Musical Clock, Mr. Conjuror Lane, Sir Jeffrey Dunstan, and the MacKabee Monsters made Peckham Fair a St. Bartholomew in little! This once merry hostelrie was a favourite suburban retreat of Dicky Suett. Cherub Dicky! (we never think of him without a smile and a tear) who, when (to use his own peculiar phrase) his "copper required cooling," mounted the steady, old-fashioned, three-mile-an-hour Peckham stage, and journeyed hither to allay his thirst, and qualify his alcohol with a refreshing draught of Derbyshire ale. The landlord (who was quite a character) and he were old cronies; and in the snug little parlour behind the bar, of which Dicky had the *entrée*, their hob and nobbings struck out sparks of humour that, had they exhaled before the lamps, would have set the theatre in a roar. Suett was a great frequenter of fairs. He stood treat to the conjurors, feasted the tragedy kings and queens, and many a mountebank did he make muzzy.

Concerning the Fair itself, the article gave these among other details :

> Of the four-footed race were bears, monkeys, dancing dogs, a learned pig, etc. Mr. Flockton, in his theatrical booth opposite the Kentish Drovers, exhibited the Italian fantoccini, the farce of "The Conjuror," and his inimitable musical clock. Mr. Lane "first conjuror to the King," played off his snip-snap, rip-rap, crick-crack, and thunder tricks, so that the grown babies stared like worried cats. This extraordinary genius, according to a monster advertisement displayed outside, "will drive about forty twelve-penny nails into any gentleman's breech, place him in a loadstone chair, and draw them out without the least pain! He is, in short, the most wonderful of all wonderful creatures the world ever wondered at."

On the vacant site of Flockton's theatrical booth, Dr. Collyer, a local worthy of great renown, set up his Hanover Chapel, so called in honour of the reigning dynasty, which early in the year 1911 became transformed into the Peckham Picture Playhouse and has since made way for an attractive row of shops. It is worthy of note that, as a means of widening this portion of Rye Lane without causing the least obstruction to traffic, these shop-fronts were actually and somewhat stealthily built *inside* the Cinema, and the subsequent demolition of its side wall was effected "when the wheels were off." All around new fabrics now rear their heads proudly towards the sky ; but the Kentish Drovers, bereft only of its horse-trough and wooden sign-post, presents the same exterior features as it did in the halcyon days of Peckham Fair.

A similar halting-place for cattlemen in bygone days at the corner of Old Kent Road and Commercial Street, well towards New Cross Gate, also bearing the sign of the Kentish Drovers, though comparatively modern and devoid of historic associations, merits special notice on account of its fine encaustic tile embellishment over the topmost row of windows, depicting travellers along the King's highway refreshing themselves outside the original inn.

As a surviving example of a fully licensed Manor House where two ancient customs have been carried down right into our own times, the Bowyer Arms, in Manor Street, Clapham, is a most interesting place to visit. A huge baker's oven in the basement still affords evidence of the daily dispensation of a loaf of bread by the Lady of the Manor to the village poor until the Mid-Victorian era ; while the large room overhead was the scene of generous hospitality meted out to the neighbouring tenantry on the Bowyer Estate when they paid their rents in the present bar-parlour as recently as the year 1905. The discontinuance everywhere of both pious practices is greatly to be deplored. In the one case modern Poor Law Administration has supplanted the beneficence of the "Lady," which term of old implied "the loaf-giver"; and in the other, matter-of-fact estate agents uniformly collect the rents without a thought for the joyous repast to which, as shown in Sir David Wilkie's famous picture "The Rent Day," all comers were welcome. That such social amenities characterized the Bowyer Arms even in the early days of the twentieth century may excite surprise. Where from time out of mind the tenants partook of the pleasures of the table, an old-established organization, the Bowyer Musical Society, meets for rehearsals and the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes hold their district Grand Lodge. A long rear garden has at its extremity a *café-chantant* stage, which prior to the war was frequently requisitioned for *alfresco* entertainments on summer evenings. Much more might be written concerning the Bowyer Arms, but the foregoing will suffice to whet curiosity.

Mention of a well-known painting relative to licensed premises recalls another. Once again, after an interval of five years, "Ye Olde Windmill" on Clapham Common has become the great halting-stage for turfites returning from Epsom Downs, its ample forecourt on such occasions being blocked with motor-cars and horse-drawn vehicles and the accommodation within taxed to the fullest extent down to the closing hour. Long ago, when the public-houses were allowed to remain open all night instead of having to turn out their frequenters at half-past twelve, the Windmill had its every room set apart for the crowd of Derby Day excursionists, many of whom did not seek the outer air until the arrival of the morning's milk. This picturesque hostelry dates back three centuries, and was only partially rebuilt ten years before the outbreak of the European War. Exactly as now seen, the front portion of the fabric is in the same state as when Charles I instituted the races and the twelfth Earl of Derby enhanced the importance of the national event by founding the Derby Stakes in the year 1780. To the present generation of sportsmen the fine print of J. F. Herring's celebrated painting "The Return from the Derby," which, containing the portraits of Early Victorian notabilities (amongst them the Prince Consort, Lord Palmerston and the Duke of Wellington) making a halt for refreshment at the Windmill, hangs in the cosy smoke-room, must prove an interesting study.

In September 1913, workmen employed at the Antelope, in High Street, Wandsworth, brought to light from behind some loose oak panels an old oil painting of the erstwhile isolated wayside tavern, which, albeit it had a low thatched roof and a noble elm-tree on the green sward, featured the tall sign-post, bay-window and doorway with a descending step of to-day. This picture now adorns the public parlour. For quaintness the Antelope possesses an interest all its own. Oak wainscoting abounds in every apartment, the ceilings display stout oak beams, the large kitchen contains a fire-grate centuries old, the outbuildings are of timber, and an enclosed leaden pump bears the date 1777. The primitive bar has no cellarage, but stone steps beneath a trap in the kitchen floor lead to a deep dungeon. In a tiny room, the door of which has a couple of observation holes, at the head of crazy narrow stairs, Dick Turpin spent the night in one of the two still existing bunks against the wall while the Bow Street Runners were scouring the open country round about for him.

Set back from the main thoroughfare, even the swing sign of the Antelope escapes notice until the pedestrian comes directly in front of it.

A propos of "Knights of the Road," in the snug little parlour of the George and Dragon, High Street, Acton, may be seen a framed newspaper account, under date July 12, 1763, of the then landlord of the inn, after overtaking a gentlemanly "bilker" on horseback four miles up the Uxbridge Road, being robbed of his watch and six guineas by the same adventurer at the pistol's point in true highwayman fashion. Another framed memorial of the wayside hostelry is an advertisement of the "Acton Machine" leaving the George and Dragon at nine o'clock every morning from Saturday, May 5, 1764, for the Green Man and Still on the Oxford Road. Such a description of a public conveyance strikes one as odd in these days: yet, after all, a cycle is veritably a "machine," while aviation has familiarized us with the term still more. The outer aspect of the George and Dragon cannot be very different now to what it was two hundred years ago. On the left-hand side of the coachyard, just behind the inn kitchen, is a lofty and spacious dining-hall reminiscent of many social functions ere public Assembly Rooms were called into being.

That local historians should dismiss The Doves, No. 19 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, with a mere mention of the fact that James Thomson composed his poem "Winter" under its roof seems quite unpardonable. Unquestionably he did so. Much more, however, remains to be said. Two centuries ago this unpretentious little tavern alongside the passage which divides the Lower from the Upper Mall was by far the most famous of the coffee-houses in the Environs of London. Among its regular frequenters nearer our own time were Leigh

Hunt, who resided in a cottage close by, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Captain Marryatt. But ever since the Augustan Age of literature The Doves had enjoyed a high prestige through the summertide visitations of such celebrities as Alexander Pope, Joseph Addison, Sir Richard Steele and all the other great penmen who were wont to make it the goal of a leisurely excursion in a jolly young waterman's trim-built wherry. In support of the general belief that Thomson wrote "Winter" in the room overlooking the peaceful Thames, a brass door-plate of the adjoining cottage, which originally formed part of the coffee-house, is inscribed "The Seasons." Published at the age of twenty-six, this was his earliest work of any importance, "Summer" and "Spring" succeeding it in 1727 and 1728, and "Autumn" after an interval of two years. Making allowance for the drinking bars, The Doves has undergone no change since it harboured and refreshed the *literati.*

Entitled to still greater veneration on account of its Shakespearean memories, the Three Pigeons in the High Street, Brentford, ought surely to attract a host of pilgrims. Few people out of the district, however, can have the remotest conception that the only example of a genuine Elizabethan tavern in this country, and in all likelihood the last remaining of the few convivial haunts of "The Bard" and his associates, exists to-day on the bus and tram route to Isleworth and Hounslow. It is beyond question that the Three Pigeons was kept by John Lowin, a prominent member of Shakespeare's own company, who created Hamlet and other leading parts; and thither "Her Majesty's Servants" must have made frequent trips by water from Blackfriars or Bankside. Ben Jonson alludes directly to it in *The Alchymist;* so does the author of *The Roaring*

Girl. Here George Peele, another contemporary dramatist, played some of his merry pranks. Situated close to the Magistrates' Court, the ancient tavern continued to dispense good liquor until the second year of the War, when its licence lapsed. After a while, though quite unaltered, with the exception of having green tiles affixed to the lower portion of the frontage, it took up a fresh lease of utility as a Uniform and Clothing Factory. A fire which wrought much internal havoc at the beginning of March 1920 was happily quenched ere it could reach the exterior.

Londoners interested in Old Houses with a History might spend a profitable few hours at Kingston-on-Thames. An event of great local importance in August 1916 was the serving of a banquet, for the first time during the long period of one hundred and seventy years, in the large room of "Ye Olde Jollie Butchers" in the High Street, by way of inaugurating the conversion of the renowned hostelry into a high-class restaurant. Standing beside several other ancient fabrics, this presents diamond-shaped window-panes and a solidarity of construction for the specific purpose of a guest-house quite delightful to behold. Nor is the interior less fascinating. Alike on the ground floor and in the great banqueting chamber overhead, the environment carries one back to the middle of the fifteenth century. As an inn "Ye Olde Jollie Butchers" has ceased to exist, its licence having been surrendered and the sign removed. Quaint and curious too is "Ye Swan," also in the High Street, conforming to its self-styled age on the signboard, "Anno Domini, 1535." At the corner of the Market Place stands "Ye Olde Segar Shoppe," a fine timbered structure with overhanging stories, displaying the year of its erection, 1611. A genuine bit of Mediæval Kingston, narrow and tortuous, is the Apple Market, at the entrance to which from Eden Street, anciently Heathen Street, since this was the Jewish quarter of the town, the Old Harrow, though no longer used for public refreshment, has been suffered to remain as a landmark of bygone conviviality. In quitting this highly interesting aggregation of antiquated dwellings contiguous to the Coronation Stone of the Saxon Kings, the remark may be made that all the time-honoured inns have a story to tell, and are therefore worth more than a passing notice.

A glorious old inn, devoid of any brickwork whatsoever, reveals itself with the sign of the King's Head at Roehampton. Built in the year 1460, and nowhere betraying the least token of decay, this is just such a one as would gladden the hearts of American tourists. Words utterly fail to convey an impression of its rural charm. A venerable elm-tree in the foreground casts its leafy shade over the whole irregular structure, while extending down to the cross-ways are prettily laid-out tea-gardens with summer arbours. Here, too, Dick Turpin is said to have eluded his pursuers after an exciting chase across Wimbledon Common.

Stretching along the right-hand side of the still existing coachyard of the Greyhound Hotel, in the High Street, Croydon, is a quaintly interesting fabric with this inscription over the entrance: "Ye Olde Smokeing Room, Established 1520." Quite vain it would be to encourage the belief that men puffed tobacco clouds herein so far back, because Sir Walter Raleigh, the beneficent introducer of "the fragrant weed" into England, was at the time unborn. The signboard really fixes the establishment of the original guest-house of which this restful and attractive snuggery formed a part. Not so many years ago the old Greyhound Inn had a sign projecting half-way across the narrow street. The present hotel contains a commodious concert-room, while the catering for outside patrons can vie with that of any Metropolitan *caravanserai.*

On the breezy heights of Hampstead, just five miles north-west of St. Paul's great central landmark, there are still some ancient hostelries to which memories of the perils of bygone road-travel cling. Apart from such associations, one of them is noted for diverse *alfresco* allurements. For while both the Spaniards and Jack Straw's Castle may lay claim to greater veneration by virtue of sheer age, and they also have tea-gardens attached, the Bull and Bush, far-famed as the rendezvous of eminent writers, painters and players from time out of mind, is to-day a yet more composite "House of Refreshment and Ease"—to quote its advertised description two hundred years ago—than our pleasure-loving ancestors ever dreamed of.

Built about the year 1645, this delectable hill-side resort was originally a farmhouse where new milk and cream, cakes and home-brewed ale tempted young cits and their sweethearts into the open country for a holiday jaunt. Local historians agree that the picturesque habitation, much as now seen, with great bay-windows and small glass panes, whose drawn red blinds when evening's shadows fall suggest homely comfort, became the private residence of William Hogarth after his elopement with the only daughter of the celebrated artist, Sir James Thornhill. It is pleasant to reflect that he himself planted the ring of yew-trees within which, at a rustic table, one may sit and drink deep of Nature's refreshing delights. When at length Lady Thornhill brought about a family reconciliation, Hogarth and his bride went to share the parental mansion in Dean Street, Soho (see p. 134), where he had, under Sir James's tuition, 'verted from engraving to painting.

Thereupon some enterprising Boniface converted the peaceful homestead on the Northern Heights into an inn, and displaying the sign of the Bull and Bush, recommended it in contemporary advertisements by the descriptive title quoted above. No doubt his idea was to establish a rival to the Upper Flask Tavern, now known as Heath House and still preserving its Jacobean features, which enjoyed great repute for the mutton pies made by Christopher Kat, who gave his name to the famous literary and political club located within its walls. Here, as a fugitive, the heroine of Samuel Richardson's epistolary novel *Clarissa Harlowe* arrived by the Hampstead coach, and, after the Upper Flask had become a private residence, George Stevens, the well-known antiquary and critic, ended his days.

Retaining all the characteristics of a well-kept farmhouse and specializing generous food-fare, the Bull and Bush soon began to attract " the London wits and people of quality." We are told that Joseph Addison deigned to it his favour, and often brought friends to enjoy themselves, after the simple fashion of Sir Roger de Coverley, drinking ripe ale and smoking a churchwarden pipe on summer afternoons ; but this statement must be received with caution, inasmuch as he passed away ten years before Hogarth's happy union. It was the Upper Flask which, as a prominent member of the Kit-Kat Club, the great English essayist affected. On the other hand, the roll of celebrities in Literature, Art and the Drama who spent joyous hours at the Bull and Bush is a long one. To cite but a few of them at random, these include David Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Laurence Sterne, Samuel Foote, Colley Cibber, Thomas Gainsborough, Edmund Kean, Charles

Lamb, Barton Booth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Hone.

Nearer our own time all the brightest ornaments of Victorian Art and Literature made holiday excursions to the Bull and Bush, and when Harry Humphries, who possessed an intimate acquaintance with such worthies, became the host, the fame of its cuisine ran high. Men of fastidious tastes whom he entertained right royally with the pleasures of the table ranged from Charles Dickens to George Augustus Sala, E. L. Blanchard and George Du Maurier. Humphries also resuscitated the old English games of skittles and bowls. All the summer through the verdant lawn, faced by the rustic arbours of tradition, is set out with cane lounge-chairs and snow-white table-linen for the express behoof of tea-drinkers. Adjacent to it is the great circular pinewood platform where life's cares may be forgotten amid the exhilarating delights of the dance, and which also serves as the auditorium for the *alfresco* concerts. Illuminated on such occasions, the gardens, with their gay throng, present a scene of enchantment. Here then, and perhaps nowhere else round London, the revivification of the old tea-gardens in conjunction with music, dancing, bowls and skittles and the purveying of excellent repasts commendable to *gourmets*, actually outvies the attractions of the open-air resorts of the Continent. Despite all this, to assert that "The Old Bull and Bush," far-famed in story and song, is a rough Cockney Paradise would be very much beside the mark.

Of all the Highwaymen's Inns dotted about the environs of the Great City, not one is so intimately and incontrovertibly associated with the redoubtable Dick Turpin as the Spaniards at Hampstead. This seems to have been his regular lurking-place in the intervals of holding up defenceless travellers by coach on the lonely road. But few Londoners are aware that a subterranean passage, now bricked up, leads from the cellars of the inn to Caen Wood, and in its gloomy depths others beside Dick Turpin were wont to stalk away undetected. From the Spaniards it was that he set out on his famous Ride to York. He had engaged a room for the night, but after supping with two trusted associates belowstairs, was surprised by the arrival of King George's men, and made good his escape through a window overlooking the yard where Black Bess stood close to the wall in readiness for instant flight. A glass case in the bar contains three curious knives and forks with bent handles which were used by the party at the interrupted meal. The room occupied by Turpin, the spurs he left behind, and the stable of his bonny mare may be seen to-day by any interested visitor. Moreover, a small window, not quite a foot square, in the staircase wall is pointed out as having been cut at his own request so that money, food or drink might be handed to him on horseback while the bloodhounds of the law engaged in hot pursuit were temporarily off the scent.

To some extent the Spaniards also played a part in the "No Popery" Riots. When the mob, intent upon wrecking Lord Mansfield's country house at Caen Wood, invaded the old inn, doubtless seeking to reach their objective by stealth through the cellar passage above mentioned, the landlord allowed them to consume all the beer they desired, while he sent a mounted messenger to the City. Having drunk their fill, and possibly divining his motive, the rioters abandoned their original purpose and proceeded by way of Kentish Town to Mansfield House in Bloomsbury Square, where, among other treasures, a priceless MS. library, embodying his lordship's life experience of the law, fell a prey to public fury.

As an inn, the ancient gatehouse and Park Keeper's residence—which it really was and looks like to-day—at the Hampstead entrance to the Bishop of London's estate across the hill-brow at Highgate, perpetuates the memory of two Spaniards who first obtained its refreshment licence and are said to lie buried somewhere about the grounds. Readers of *Pickwick* will call to mind the incident of Mrs. Bardell's arrest while seated with her friends at one of the little tables, the hackney-coach waiting at the gate, of the Spaniards Inn.

Intimately associated with Charles Dickens himself is Jack Straw's Castle. Though now dispensing all the comforts of a family guest-house, this noted hostelry, named after the crude habitation of a prominent leader in Wat Tyler's insurrection whose men destroyed both the Priory of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem in Clerkenwell and that of the Canons of St. Bartholomew, Smithfield, well acts up to its traditions as a semi-rural pleasure-haunt. Accompanied by his friend and biographer, John Forster, the great English novelist often made it the goal of a week-end ride on horseback from Town. Not to embrace Jack Straw's Castle in a visit to Hampstead Heath is unthinkable.

Throughout the eighteenth century and almost down to our own time, pleasure gardens with incidental refreshment existed along the northern fringe of London, as then defined by the New, Pentonville and City Roads. An interesting survival, substantial as well as in name, is the Coffee House, a little way up the right-hand side of Chalton Street, Somers Town, from the Euston Road. Owing to the salubrity of the air and the cheapness of house rents, foreign refugees constituted the chief inhabitants of the district. These found in the leafy arbours and wooden " boxes " of the grounds of the Coffee House some approximation to the Continental open-air resorts, despite the fact that alcoholic beverages were denied them. Pleasure-seeking Cockneys likewise affected this summer retreat to sip, rather than tea, the coffee for which the place was famed. As time wore on it became a regular posting-house, invested with a full liquor licence. The advent of railways made an appreciable difference to the revenues of the Coffee House, since coaches no longer drew up at its portals, while the building of three great termini in the Euston Road utterly destroyed the rural environment. Nevertheless, as long as the gardens were preserved intact, picnic parties and Sunday School excursions continued to enliven this portion of Somers Town. The original gateway which gave access to the private bars has disappeared only within the last dozen years.

One of the few wooden " houses of call " still left standing in High Street, Wapping, is the Bull's Head. This merits particular notice on account of its association with the riverside customs of a bygone age. The regular resort of bargees and stevedores, the common bar contains a paybox with a sliding panel and shelf, recalling the good old days of merchant shipping when the landlord of the Bull's Head was himself a master stevedore. Engaging the men as they might be required, he allowed them to run up a score for drinks, and paid out to each his balance of wages through the box-window at the week's end. War-time rationing—an event of yesterday—must have been sorely felt by the frequenters of this rendezvous, who ordinarily consume great chunks of bread and cheese with peeled polonies and pickles at the large centre table. Perhaps warned by the inscription on a cross-beam, black with age and smoke : " As a bird is known by its note, so a man is known by his language," they are singularly circumspect over their choice of words.

Wooden-fronted hostelries in the Metropolis are now very far between. One such, denominated the Greengate, is a conspicuous landmark in that portion of the Barking Road which belongs to the parish of Plaistow. Quite unaltered but for the public bars built out from the main fabric, this has graced the spot for more than three centuries, and formerly marked the end of the habitable highway between London and Barking Abbey. Looking towards the Thames was a vast marsh, across which the shipping formed a pleasant panorama. The open space, still occupied by tables and forms for *alfresco* refreshment, then served as a halting-place for cattle while their drovers regaled themselves. Immediately opposite stood the toll-gate, painted green. This gave its name to the inn, and a replica of it surmounts the public bars. Almost alone among the wayside hostelries of London, owing to its ample forecourt accommodation, the Greengate presents a very animated appearance on summer evenings when the workers are at leisure. Hence this meeting of the ways possesses a character all its own. Strikingly contrasted with the old-world aspect of the inn is the Greengate Electric Theatre adjoining, which belongs to the same licensee.

Few historic hostelries within easy reach of the City have preserved their pristine freshness like "Ye Olde Spotted Dog" at Forest Gate. This picturesque, ivy-mantled wooden fabric, with gables, appears very much to-day as when Daniel Defoe referred to it in his *History of the Plague*. Hither, during the prevalence of that dreadful scourge, came the citizens to encamp in the fields round about, and again after the Great Fire had devastated London in the following year. But we can go even further back than the Restoration period to associate the Spotted Dog with Old England. A large painting on the west wall of the public bar, which, if cleansed, would reveal the arms of the City Corporation and the date 1603, is a memorial of the meetings of merchant princes for eight years continuously while an earlier plague carried off thirty thousand souls. This gift to the house invested it with certain pre-War privileges never enjoyed by innkeepers, notably the option of refusing refreshment or accommodation to *bona fide* travellers. Stretching along the east wall is the largest and queerest fire-place imaginable. In front of it the Merry Monarch and his courtiers toasted their feet when they came to visit the homeless citizens close by. The oak rafters and cross beams are black with age. Two wooden steps lead down to the sanded bar, and the saloon and parlour in the gable ends have very low ceilings. A peculiar significance attaches to the absence of a cellar, all casks having to be stored in the basement of the modern domicile built at the rear. The grounds embraced in the property are of great extent, most of them being given up to Saturday sport, when the acclamations of enthusiastic spectators make the welkin ring.

The Spotted Dog was not at first a wayside inn ministering to the wants of the inner man. Far from it. To the intense regret of everyone acquainted with its history, a huge barn-like structure in the vegetable garden running northwards at the bend of Upton Lane has of late years been wantonly sacrificed by the new proprietors in the interests of a great bottling store. This anciently enclosed the kennels for a pack of Royal hounds. When Henry VIII followed the chase in Epping Forest, he, after crossing the river from Greenwich Palace, took up the hounds here at Upton, about a mile from the toll-gate which less than two decades ago gave the name of Forest Gate to a new residential district, and much the same distance from Boleyn Castle, the ancestral home of his ill-fated Queen, which now houses the Upton Park Social and Sports Club. Accordingly, the Spotted Dog constituted the residence of the Master of the Hounds, and, like many a "Green Man" denoting the domicile of the head gamekeeper on a nobleman's estate, he enjoyed the privilege for personal profit of refreshing travellers who came that way. On this account, and the part played by it in English History, the house stands alone among the inns of the country at large as having its licence direct from the Crown. A primitive bell outside the public-bar entrance is possibly the identical one rung by the earliest guests. Until June 1913, when the freehold of the property was knocked down at auction to a well-known brewery firm for £20,100, it had been in the possession of the Vause family for a hundred and fifty years. All things considered, the Spotted Dog is the most captivating "house of call" in the environs of the Great City.

ROUND THE TOWN

III

ROUND THE TOWN

QUITE unnoticed by those who never have occasion to pass through it, a plain wooden gateway at the head of stone steps some distance in front of the supporting arches of Blackfriars Road Railway Goods Station leads direct into a region intimately associated with Shakespeare and his dramatic contemporaries. As now viewed, Bankside is a prosaic locality enough, the name denoting a single thoroughfare, for the most part given up to the avocations of men connected with barges and small river-craft. Wharves, warehouses, cranes and merchandise are its distinctive features.

In olden times, ere Southwark had become the habitat of countless toilers and moilers, the Borough High Street alone forming a continuous line of houses and hostelries and London Bridge the sole means of communication with the City, Bankside embraced a very extensive area, its southern limits being roughly defined by a straight line running eastward from Christ Church, Blackfriars Road. Beyond were green fields and hedgerows. But for a few scattered dwellings, a famous tavern and some oddly constructed amusement resorts, the whole district was quite open to the Thames. Can we now picture this as the cradle of the British Drama and the common pleasure-haunt of the people, where the brightest ornaments of the Elizabethan stage resided, and whither gay courtiers, young cits and grave burghers regularly came to see them hold the mirror up to Nature? The idea is hardly conceivable in these days of overgrown London.

Irrespective of various other public attractions, Bankside harboured no less than four theatres—the Globe, the Swan, the Rose and the Hope. The memory of the first-named is kept green by a piece of sculpture affixed to a wall within the precincts of Barclay, Perkins & Co.'s mammoth brewery which the late Sir Herbert Tree ceremoniously unveiled on October 8, 1909. Designed by Dr. William Martin, F.S.A., and executed by Professor Lanteri, of the Royal School of Art, South Kensington, it shows Bankside, the Globe, the river and Old London Bridge with houses upon it, and bears this inscription: "Here stood the Globe Playhouse of Shakespeare, 1598–1613. Commemorated by the Shakespeare Reading Society of London and by subscribers in the United Kingdom and India."

Of the rest, the Swan was the only one not comprised in the same landed estate, for all the adjacent streets still belong to the brewery. At this theatre, situate in the famous Paris Garden, which extended across Blackfriars Road westward of the great bull and bear-baiting circuses, Ben Jonson played a round of parts before he took up authorship. Until Shakespeare wrote for the Globe, it was also the most important. John de Witt, a Dutchman, who has left us a drawing of the interior, with three thousand seats, describes the Swan Theatre as "the Continent of the world, because half the year a world of beauties and brave spirits resorted to it." After the Commonwealth period it degenerated into a place for gladiatorial shows. The Rose stood at the north end of the present Rose Alley, and the Hope quite close to the Globe.

Yet, after all, the crowning interest of Bankside centres itself in the exact spot where Shakespeare dwelt. This is the White Bear Tavern, in Bear Gardens. By old inhabitants of the neighbourhood the tradition has been well preserved. The Falcon Inn, which Shakespeare, Marlowe, Massinger, Ford, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher must have frequented daily, stood on the site of Falcon Dock and Wharf, Nos. 79 and 80 Bankside. It was demolished in the year 1808 after having long been the starting-point for stage-coaches to different parts of Surrey, Kent and Sussex. In an adjoining house, now replaced by the Falcon Coffee and Dining Rooms, lived Sir Christopher Wren while he was engaged upon the rebuilding of St. Paul's. Stationed anywhere on Bankside, that is to say on the river-front, one may obtain the best possible view of his noble work.

Apart from its proud possession of the Globe Theatre site, the Barclay and Perkins Brewery can lay claim to more modern literary associations. In the time of George III it belonged to Henry Thrale, whose accomplished wife Dr. Johnson held in such high esteem. The great lexicographer was an ever-welcome visitor at the brewery house. He assisted Mr. Thrale in his contests for the parliamentary representation of the Borough of Southwark, and after his death, as sole executor, put up the property for sale under the hammer. Asked by an intending bidder what the brewery might be considered worth, Johnson, who flitted about with an inkhorn and a pen in his buttonhole, like an Exciseman, made the memorable reply: "Sir, we are not here to sell a parcel of vats and boilers, but the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice." An eager competition resulted in the brewery being purchased, on behalf of the original partners, whose names will always be associated therewith, by David Barclay, the banker, for £135,000. These were Robert Barclay, his nephew, and Mr. Perkins, the general manager of the business ever since its establishment by the deceased. A treasured relic in the board-room of the company's offices is Dr. Johnson's great leather-coated easy-chair, which the Thrales had kept for his exclusive use when he paid them a visit. As the outcome of Messrs. Barclay and Perkins's reverence for his portrait in oils which graced their counting-house, the directors of the present firm have thought fit to adopt a reproduction of it as their trade-mark. When one comes to reflect upon the matter, this seems in perfect keeping with the Doctor's well-known dictum on that happy human contrivance, "a good tavern or inn." Another interesting link with the past is the firm's monster coloured poster—familiar enough before the war—of the immediate vicinity of the Globe Theatre, peopled by players, playwrights and playgoers.

Quitting the Surrey side, we can again cast ourselves into other times by treading historic ground where none but the antiquity hunter might happen upon it. Hidden away behind tall buildings, scarcely a stone's-throw from the turmoil of the Strand, is the quietest spot in all our Capital City—the Precinct of the Savoy. Thousands of Londoners are not even aware of its existence, often though they may hurry or ride past the gentle slope which, leading direct thereto, affords them a glimpse of the Thames. If they advanced only a few yards an exclamation of surprise might escape their lips. To be "completely out of the world, although on the very skirt and verge and hem of the roaring world of London," as George Augustus Sala once described it, falls to the experience of anyone who enters the garth gate that always by day stands invitingly open. Here the greenest of grass, well-kept gravel paths, and grey old tombstones shaded by plane and lilac trees, pleasantly suggest a country churchyard.

Stretching along the west side of this vernal retreat we behold a venerable fabric—the Chapel Royal of the Savoy. It dates from the year 1505. Familiar to a mere handful, so to speak, of parish worshippers, and, as a rule, visited only by globe-trotters under the guidance of a tourist agency cicerone, this with its God's Acre is all that remains of the great Hospital of St. John the Baptist, built by Henry VII upon the ruins of the ancient palace of Peter, Duke of Savoy, which had been pillaged and burnt in Wat Tyler's rebellion. Like the original stately pile, it extended from the Strand to the Thames, westwards to Carting Lane and eastwards across the Waterloo Bridge approach. All the land hereabout is still Crown property, vested in the Duchy of Lancaster. Through the centuries it has borne the name of the Savoy, which we find perpetuated at every turn. Facing the churchyard in Savoy Street is a superior hostelry, the Savoy Palace, while the opposite block of buildings, reaching from the Strand corner to the very garth gate, is Savoy House. South of the open space is Savoy Hill, with Savoy Mansions, and west of it, just behind the Chapel Royal, a narrow lane styled Savoy Steps, the actual steps having their outlet in a court—which no one ever notices—close to Terry's Theatre. Finally, Savoy Court, the great block of stone flats fronting the Savoy Hotel, the arched entrance to which is surmounted by a life-size gilt statue of Peter, Duke of Savoy, in the widened portion of the Strand, has on each pillar an ornamental brass tablet setting forth the historic associations of the site. Whether these memorials ever arrest the attention of passers-by is doubtful.

To pen a complete history of the Savoy would occupy much space. The first owner of the Palace was Simon de Montfort, who fell at the Battle of Evesham. After that event Henry III granted it as a permanent possession to Peter, Duke of Savoy, when he came over to England on a visit to his niece, Eleanor of Provence, wife of the King. At his death it passed by will to the monks of Havering-at-the-Bower, in Essex, from whom it was bought by Queen Eleanor for her second son, Edmund, Earl of Lancaster. The Savoy Palace continued in the hands of his descendants, and after the Battle of Poictiers, 1356, became the lodging of the captive King John of France. John was set free in October 1360, but, unable to fulfil the conditions of his release, voluntarily returned, and died there four years later. The Savoy Palace next became the residence of John of Gaunt, during which period Chaucer often received Court favours within its walls, and in the Chapel of Our Lady was married to Philippa, daughter of a Knight of Hainault and sister to a mistress of the Duke. This marriage is celebrated in Chaucer's *Dream*. After the rebels under Wat Tyler burned down the Palace in the year 1381, it remained a ruin until Henry VII rebuilt it as a hospital in honour of St. John the Baptist and endowed it by his will. The hospital was suppressed by Edward VI, but refounded by Mary, and finally dissolved in the reign of Elizabeth. Under Cromwell the famous Savoy Conference held its sittings in the hospital buildings, some portions of which were allowed to remain until the whole ground was cleared for the present approach to Waterloo Bridge.

The Chapel Royal, as we now view it, belonged to Henry VII's hospital. It has a rich coloured ceiling and resembles a collegiate fane. Unfortunately, all the tombs which once made it so interesting were destroyed in a fire that consumed the interior in the year 1864. The Chapel was, however, restored at the sole cost of Queen Victoria in imitation of the original design. The finest of its stained-glass windows is that over the altar in memory of the Prince Consort. As a genuine Savoyard, who popularized Gilbert and Sullivan's light opera at the neighbouring theatre specially built by him for the purpose, the late R. D'Oyly Carte is honoured with a memorial window. There are two Sunday services, and afternoon prayers throughout the week except on Saturdays. But at any time the ancient Savoy Chapel may be visited and admired.

As is the case with the Precinct of the Savoy or the Adelphi, those who know London well may instantly escape from the turmoil of traffic into sequestered streets where absolute stillness reigns. The satisfaction thus derived equals that of an oarsman toiling against a strong current when he pulls into a peaceful backwater for a spell of lazy comfort. Such a haven of rest is Maiden Lane, behind the Strand. Though the hand of the builder has been at work here, the recognized short cut between Covent Garden and Trafalgar Square still retains much of its old-world character. All the house-fronts on the south side, excepting only a rebuilt tavern, are grimy with age, and the businesses carried on beneath have known little change since time immemorial. Men accustomed to hurry through it seldom take note of their environment. Others, intent upon making a call somewhere, are similarly oblivious of the fact that this secluded narrow by-way once rang with nocturnal revelry.

Americans, who systematically explore every nook and corner of London that promises them a modicum of literary or antiquarian interest, rarely set foot in Maiden Lane, for the simple reason that the guide-books ignore alike its bygone associations and its present-day attractions. True enough, "Baedeker" includes Rule's among London's oyster-houses of high repute, but with such bare mention of their survivor the convivial haunts of the Lane are curtly dismissed. Here were the famous Cyder Cellars, the scene of the nightly orgies of that profound Greek scholar Richard Porson, and the "Sam Hall" song which created a furore; while at a quaint hostelry, the Bedford Head, the original of the new tavern set up in the year 1870, was held the Reunion Club, a brotherhood of wits whose jollification rent the night air until the grey dawn.

More sedate was the company at Rule's, which has been a noted professional resort ever since the close of the eighteenth century. An epitome of its social history might fill a volume. Established way back in the year 1798, this may justly claim to have been the earliest rendezvous for superior intelligences of which we possess any record. Before the Athenæum Club came into being in 1824 and the Garrick Club in 1831, the votaries of Literature, Art and the Drama had no place to meet save at Rule's. Nor did they afterwards desert it for the exclusiveness ensured to members by a ballot election and a yearly subscription. And wheresoever men of light and leading foregather, those occupying less enviable positions will flock. The mere citation of eminent authors, playwrights, actors, artists, critics, aye, even judges, who have made Rule's their rendezvous for joyous feeding and good fellowship would constitute a lengthy list. Sir Henry Irving, John L. Toole and William Terriss deigned to this restful snuggery their constant patronage. At one table on the first floor Sir Walter Besant and James Rice formulated over luncheon and dinner their joint novel *The Golden Butterfly*. Long years ago Sir Francis Burnand, ere his editorship of *Punch* had brought him knightly honour, wrote: "To get anything indifferent here would be the exception, not the rule."

It is, however, relative to its theatrical museum and portrait gallery, the like of which exists nowhere else in the United Kingdom, that Rule's merits particular notice to-day. The nucleus of this unique collection was formed by a few memorials of Albert Smith's single-man entertainment, "The Ascent of Mont Blanc," at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. Amongst them were a willow-pattern plate adorned with his portrait—he had long hair, a bushy reddish-brown beard, small keen-set eyes and an aquiline nose—and a witty invitation to what he called "the show," dated November 28, 1855. Additions to these from time to time made the oyster-bar the more alluring, but not until the late Captain O'Brien—most genial of clubmen and the husband of Carrie Julian, of stage renown—took over the house at the dawn of the twentieth century did Rule's become a repository of Art. Succeeding William Harding Bayliss, a host of sixteen years' popularity, whose predecessors were the sons of the original Rule, he made the acquisition of interesting mementoes a labour of love. Now not a square foot of wall-space on three floors, as well as the stairs, can be found *sans* portraits in oils, photographs, etchings, drawings, sketches, caricatures, busts and playbills, comprising a complete epitome of the British Drama. Nevertheless, scores of actors and others who congregate in the outer bar know nothing of this unique exhibition. A few steps beyond the curtained doorway would give rise to an exclamation of astonishment and incite them to linger lovingly over a collection which has never been catalogued.

Rule's meagre window display, consisting merely of two enormous clam shells that gained a prize at the

Fisheries Exhibition, South Kensington, 1883, affords passers-by no hint of what awaits inspection within. A more or less apocryphal account of their history, published in the *Royal Dramatic College Annual* for 1886, need not detain us here. Albert Smith used to tell his friends that they belonged to the largest "hoyster" he had ever opened. A glass case just inside the stairway entrance contains, among other curiosities, some green and yellow Chartreuse nearly sixty years old; rare sherries from the bins of Windsor Castle (1800), with the "V.R." label, and a bottle of Bass's Pale Ale, corked and sealed by the future King Edward VII in the year 1862. Passing through the front bar or the side entrance, the visitor finds himself in the cosiest of snuggeries imaginable. All around are exhibits bespeaking the Thespian character of the rendezvous. He can extend his survey upstairs to the salon, and yet further aloft to the Dighton Room, in which the Eccentric Club celebrated its coming of age, with equal profit and wonderment.

An enumeration of the heterogeneous objects of interest at Rule's would easily fill a newspaper column. Perhaps the first to arrest attention is a large marble bust of that inimitable light comedian Charles Mathews. Near by we gaze upon the mirthful countenance in bronze of a modern mime—Dan Leno. A striking portrait of Mrs. Kendal exemplifies the early work of an artist who has since risen to fame on "the boards" —Sir J. Forbes Robertson. Facing this hangs the original sketch for Sir Thomas Lawrence's admired painting of John Philip Kemble as Hamlet in the National Portrait Gallery. Americans will also recognize a close tie between the Drama of the Mother Country and that of their own land in the fine likeness of Edwin Forrest.

Done in oils, by the graving tool or the sun's rays, the features and stage robes of eminent actors, from David Garrick down to Sir Henry Irving and Hermann Vezin, may on these walls be studied. The Keans, Macready, Phelps, Gustavus V. Brooke, Liston, Harley, Buckstone, T. P. Cooke, Munden, Wright, Farren, Toole—all are here. Neither do famous histrions of the gentler sex lack representation. Operatic stars, dancers like Grisi and Taglioni, and great *maestri*—Monsieur Jullien of *Bal masqué* celebrity, for example—enter into this comprehensive collection. There are, moreover, views of old London theatres, copies of original leases, invitation cards for gala performances and playbills galore. An immense bound volume of the last named, dating back three-quarters of a century, irrespective of those framed on the walls, should prove invaluable to the future historian of the London stage.

For one such example, Mr. Harry Davis, the late proprietor and the brother of James Davis, of light opera fame, somewhat indignantly refused a hundred pounds. Not to be parted with at any price, this is the only bill extant of a wonderful charity performance at the Hanover Square Rooms in 1851 of Lord Lytton's *No so Bad as We Seem*, in which Charles Dickens, John Forster, Douglas Jerrold, Mark Lemon, Dr. Westland Marston, Peter Cunningham, Charles Knight, Wilkie Collins and John Tenniel took part. Though perhaps the most highly prized by a playbill connoisseur, this is only one of the treasures gracing the walls at Rule's. Another sets forth the name of Miss Ellen Terry against the character of Mamillius in *The Winter's Tale* at the old Princess's Theatre, May 29, 1856, thus attesting the celebrated actress's first appearance on the stage in her ninth year.

Rule's is something more than a theatrical museum.

It embraces statuary, antiques, engravings of Old London, sporting prints, paintings by George Morland, Constable and other famous artists, the largest collection known of Rowlandson's sketches, thirty-four of Richard Dighton's coloured portraits of notabilities, *temp.* 1800, and no less than one hundred and eighty delineations of London street characters from his brush, in addition to the whole first series of *Vanity Fair* cartoons by "Ape." Hours can, in fact, be spent over examining the multitudinous objects here brought together, and when the mind has been sated with intellectual fare, the cuisine at Rule's will minister to the wants of the inner man.

Men grown old and grey will cherish recollections of the Cyder Cellars in Maiden Lane. Though mentioned in every book dealing with London of the past, the general inference, for want of a direct statement, is that this home of nocturnal song and fine feeding has long ago been improved out of existence. Therefore it may cause some surprise to learn that the entire fabric remains in precisely the same state as when, during the Roaring Forties, it was in the zenith of its popularity. Down to the last decade it served the twofold purpose, above and below stairs, of a Jewish Synagogue and the Adelphi Sporting Club. Adjoining the new stage-door is the Royal Entrance of the Adelphi Theatre, in the shadow of which William Terriss, the ladies' idol, fell a victim to an insane assassin's knife. The chances are, had he not been privileged to let himself in by the nearest way to his dressing-room, a valuable life might have been spared.

That cider was at any time the specific beverage at this cavernous retreat one greatly doubts. Hither, night after night, came Richard Porson to get incontinently drunk as he only could. Biographers affirm that, notwithstanding the incredible draughts he imbibed, his wit displayed itself the more after each fresh potation. Other eminent men regularly attracted to the Cyder Cellars were Dr. Maguire and his colleagues on *Fraser's Magazine* ; Napoleon III, before he became President of the French Republic ; Benjamin Disraeli (the future Earl of Beaconsfield), Charles Dickens, Mark Lemon, Douglas Jerrold and the majority of *Punch* writers.

The Cyder Cellars figure under their own name in Albert Smith's novel *The Adventures of Mr. Ledbury*, and as "The Back Kitchen" in Thackeray's *Pendennis*, where we can read of the mixed company drawn to the famous night-haunt. A potent factor in the notoriety of the place was the singing of "Sam Hall," the weird chant with a haunting refrain about a chimney-sweep who had committed a murder soliloquizing in prison on the eve of his execution. A strange gruesome figure, occupying a kind of pulpit in one corner of the crowded room and wearing a battered old hat, the impersonator of the felon, originally an Aberdeen sing-song artist named Ross (Hodgen according to Thackeray, and "The Body-Snatcher" the song), created a profound impression. The furore lasted for eighteen months. Guardsmen, University bucks, town rakes, sprigs of nobility, even parsons, country squires, farmers, tradesmen and City apprentices came again and again to be enthralled by this marvellous bit of realism : so that there was never any standing-room towards the witching hour. The extraordinary vogue of this tavern vocalist with a single song at the same *locale* during the greater part of the years 1848 and 1849 certainly eclipsed everything ever heard of before or since. What became of him afterwards no one knew.

Quite different was the assemblage when Thackeray himself established at the Cyder Cellars the Fielding Club. This he did owing to his experience of the impossibility of obtaining a supper at the Garrick after midnight, or infusing anything like liveliness into that austere institution. Coveting the society of those who could put aside purely professional matters in their hours of leisure, he very soon gathered around him as members all the foremost men of his time. Here the celebrated Amateur Pantomime, produced at the Olympic Theatre and repeated by Royal Command at Windsor Castle in 1855, was planned and rehearsed. Such a delightful snuggery as Thackeray and his colleagues made of the Cyder Cellars could be met with nowhere else in London. Its mural decorations consisted of quaint panellings either suggested or executed by enthusiastic Fieldingites. Albert Smith's had views of Mont Blanc, the subject of his pictorial monologue entertainment at the Egyptian Hall, while that of his brother Arthur contained the portraits of the entire coterie encircling a small mirror underscribed " Another Member of the Fielding Club."

When, in consequence of his failing health and the unwillingness of its members to carry on without him, the author of *Vanity Fair* dissolved the Fielding Club, respectability fled from the Cyder Cellars. Thereafter it degenerated into a *locale* for " Baron " Nicholson's clever but disgusting " Judge and Jury Entertainment," which, originally exploited at the Garrick's Head, Bow Street, was transferred to the Coal Hole in the Strand, where, during the Great Exhibition of 1851, he presided over the mock tribunal thrice nightly and made much money. It was in 1858, after undergoing various short terms of imprisonment for debt, that he removed his forensic attraction to Maiden Lane. Subsequent exhibitions of still more disgusting *Poses plastiques* gave the Cyder Cellars a bad name, which attempted revivals of the old nocturnal harmony could not redeem.

The next stage in the history of the Cyder Cellars was a School of Arms. As the Adelphi Sporting Club for a number of years afterwards, under the management of Mr. Isidore Abrahams, it did good work amongst the poor of the district by dispensing soup and food during the winter months. To-day the cavernous retreat, in nowise altered, and even retaining its low concert platform, serves as a warehouse or book-store for the Social-Democratic Party, whose publication department occupies the ground floor. Strikingly contrasted with the regular night-life of the region belowstairs was the Jewish Synagogue overhead. The same narrow passage between the Adelphi Royal Entrance and the book-shop leads to the Rehearsal Theatre, which has latterly also been used as a Dance Hall. Innumerable chapels have been converted into cinemas, but this affords us the only instance of a synagogue turned over to cognate secular usages.

Of all the convivial night-haunts of London, none could ever hope to compare with Evans's Supper Rooms in Covent Garden. Built for his own occupation by Sir Kenelm Digby, the eminent physician, the present home of the National Sporting Club, on the north side of the market, is a fine old mansion of the Restoration period which later became the town residence of various notabilities. One of these, as a bronze tablet beside the entrance affirms, was Admiral Edward Russell, Earl of Orford, after his signal victory over the French at the Battle of La Hogue on May 19, 1692. The year 1773 witnessed the conversion of the edifice into a family hotel. A subsequent proprietor struck a new note by styling it " The Grand Hotel " and preparing such excellent repasts that none but noblemen gathered around the great oak table in its " Star Room." This proud achievement brings us down to the opening of the nineteenth century.

The next change took place when W. C. Evans, an erstwhile lessee of Covent Garden Theatre and the Cyder Cellars, identified himself with the hotel. His introduction of high-class concerts by paid artistes, in the course of which patrons ate chops, steaks, broiled kidneys, poached eggs and bacon, Welsh rarebits, " devilled " bones or anchovy toast, and potatoes baked in their jackets, the drinks consisting of bitter ale, " half and half " and hot brandy and water, set a quite new fashion in " having a night out." Such success indeed waited upon enterprise that an ample fortune enabled him to retire in the year 1844. At once Evans's Supper Rooms passed into the hands of John Green, whose familiar forename " Paddy " suggested the land of his birth. By sheer force of an engaging personality he ingratiated himself with all comers, and so attractive was the entertainment that the audience always overflowed. Accordingly, ten years after taking possession, he made the best possible use of the large rear garden by building thereon a new hall, to which the original (supposed to be " The Cave of Harmony " in Thackeray's *The Newcomes*) might serve as a vestibule café. At tables with four chairs to each, this accommodated eight hundred persons. Ladies were never seen, but a small screened parlour or omnibus box, let into the right-hand wall just over the stage and communicating directly with the hotel, was reserved for guests who enjoyed the privilege of inviting a lady friend.

Evans's Supper Rooms really paved the way for the Music Hall proper, in contradistinction to the tavern sing-song, and the modern Variety Theatre. Apart from the altogether exceptional "Sam Hall" engagement of the comedian Ross, both the Cyder Cellars and the Coal Hole were virtually "Free-and-Easies," with feeding adjuncts. Evans's, on the other hand, made a new departure by engaging artistes of the highest class. Down to the very last the rendering of madrigals, glees and part-songs by a specially trained male-voice choir was a distinctive feature. At the head of the hall sat the Chairman in all the glory of evening dress, less for the purpose of maintaining order with his tiny hammer than announcing the next artiste, or, while the choir occupied the stage, the number of the song in the printed Book of the Words. As one of the sights of London, foreigners and country excursionists made a point of visiting this eminently respectable and engrossing night-haunt. Even Broad Churchmen were nothing loath to rub shoulders with lawyers' clerks and shop assistants.

Contrary to expectation, the admission of ladies into the body of the auditorium, following close upon the death of "Paddy" Green, proved the undoing of Evans's. This may not appear so strange after all, when it is considered how the maintenance of the strictest traditional propriety must have had a restraining influence over the jollity of *habitués*. Surviving well into the Seventies, Evans's retained its name while it housed the Savage Club, whose periodical "kicks-up" in the Concert Hall were not unworthy of "The Joyous neighbourhood of Covent Garden." To this unconventional organization of professional men succeeded the Falstaff Club, which later became merged into the New Club and for several years attracted the fashionable world to its dances, much as the Royal Albert Hall does to-day. However, neither this nor the subsequent Evans's Supper Club, which made a great feature of artistic and theatrical reunions, was destined to achieve the celebrity of the present National Sporting Club. Nowhere else round London has a historic mansion passed through so many stages of utility.

Another interesting link with the bygone night-life of the West End is the Trocadero Restaurant, off Piccadilly Circus. Down to the year 1878 this identical fabric, minus only its Shaftesbury Avenue Annexe, was the Argyll Rooms of Terpsichorean notoriety. After suffering it to stand idle for nearly four years, the proprietor, Charles Bignell, succeeded in obtaining the requisite licence to reopen it as the Trocadero Music Hall. Here the late Miss Lottie Collins and R. G. Knowles made their first London appearance on the Variety Stage. As reintroduced by the famous tea-shop pioneers, Supper Dances are once more in the ascendant, but under greatly altered conditions. While the supper remains the chief attraction, patrons of the Trocadero Restaurant may watch the exhilarating exhibition of the light fantastic until they feel inclined to take the floor themselves.

Much though Messrs. J. Lyons & Co., Ltd., merit commendation for the modern development of restaurant music, they came very late into the field after its successful exploitation by the proprietors of the Holborn Restaurant long before Music at Meals was thought of elsewhere. This popular *locale* for daily repasts, festive gatherings, " Smokers " and Bohemian Concerts had its beginnings in the Holborn Casino—at once the principal and most respectable of London's Dance Halls during the Mid-Victorian era—which it absorbed but did not displace in the year 1874. Since then the original Grand Hall has been added to little by little, until we now find the vast establishment stretching down Kingsway and behind various other stately piles into Newton Street, the direct approach to the King's Hall.

Did they but know of it, the present generation of sportsmen would betray a sneaking fondness for the Union Arms in Panton Street, Haymarket. A once famous resort of "The Fancy," the old corner tavern here adverted to had for its landlord none other than Tom Cribb. Where bar compartments and a cosy saloon now subdivide the ground floor, many a friendly boxing bout took place during the lifetime of the ex-Champion of England. For this was unquestionably "Tom Cribb's Parlour" as described by Pierce Egan in *The Adventures of Tom and Jerry*. London Life in the Forties never had a more faithful chronicler. He outlived the pet pugilist by a few months only, dying in 1849.

A fresh impetus to a general visitation of the Union Arms might have been given by Sir Conan's Doyle's fascinating novel *Rodney Stone*, upon which the Adelphi drama *The House of Temperley* was founded, had he indicated by means of a footnote that the place still exists. Readers of the book and spectators of the play will readily call to mind the great supper and subsequent sparring in "Tom Cribb's Saloon," where the fighting host himself, Tom Becher, Joe Berks, Gloster Dick, Gentleman Jack, Backhouse, Dutch Sam, Bill Richmond, Jack Scroggins, Tom Molineaux, Dan Mendoza, George Cooper, Caleb Baldwin, Jack Randall, George Maddox and Tom Spring—all far-famed for exploits in the prize-ring—are introduced. Within living memory it was no uncommon occurrence to encounter at the Union Arms fearfully and wonderfully got-up gentry whose conversation extolled the achievements of Tom Sayers, Heenan and their contemporaries. Though the sporting parlour is no longer in evidence, the tavern itself, which dates from the year 1750, has undergone no change whatever.

Tom Cribb passed away at the house of his son, a baker, in the High Street, Woolwich, in 1848, aged sixty-seven, and was buried in the parish churchyard, where a huge lion resting on an urn forms his monument. Devotees of "the noble art of self-defence" may be gratified to learn that his eldest grandson, Thomas Henry Cribb, is the licensee of the Mitre Tavern in the same principal thoroughfare of the Arsenal Town, almost within hail of the honoured grave. Among other treasured relics which this Boniface may produce for the inspection of interested visitors are his grandsire's marriage-lines, the only medal extant of the great fight that won him the championship, and faded portraits of his pet dog and cat.

Few Londoners know the history of the Royal Adelaide Gallery in the Strand. Like the Alhambra and the Lyceum Theatre, this noble hall, identified for more than half a century with the pioneer catering enterprise of the Brothers Gatti, passed through many vicissitudes ere it became a café-restaurant on Continental lines. Built soon after the accession of William IV, it was named in honour of his consort, Queen Adelaide, and devoted to exhibitions of practical science, which were destined to be vastly improved upon in 1838 at a rival establishment further West, viz. the Royal Polytechnic Institution, Regent Street. Eight years later the Royal Adelaide Gallery made a fresh bid for popularity as a dancing saloon under the title of Laurent's Casino. This was after it had signally failed as a concert-hall, despite the fact that the music which its successive lessees gave the public could not be surpassed. Failure seemed marked out for everything attempted at the West Strand show-place. *Poses plastiques*, waxworks, more dancing and more practical science followed. In August 1857 an exhibition of "Prince, the Giant Bloodhound, the

Great Negro Hunter of the South" gave promise of an enduring attraction until the Christy Minstrels began to draw all London to the St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, and the Royal Adelaide Gallery once more closed its doors. Finally, in May 1862 the Brothers Gatti, taking over the unfortunate show-place, embarked upon that catering enterprise which has had such far-reaching results. But for their perspicuity, clubless men might still be left no choice, in the matter of discussing a meal away from home, between the Tavern "Ordinary" and the prosaic "Coffee and Dining Rooms" of tradition.

The prevalent impression that Gatti's, down Villiers Street, was the parent institution of the feeding-palace order is quite erroneous. True enough, Carlo Gatti, the uncle, had set up his little ice-cream and "goffers" shop in the heart of Hungerford Market long years before the whole ground came to be cleared for the building of the Charing Cross Railway Station and Hotel; but as the bridge was not opened for traffic until January 11, 1864, he could only have followed the example of his nephews by establishing the present café-restaurant in front of one of the arches. His acquisition of the next two arches for conversion into London's first Grand Billiard Saloon and a Music Hall displayed true business acumen. With the passing of the lease into other hands in April 1915 an honoured name vanished from the café-restaurant down Villiers Street, though in the memory of Londoners past middle age it will surely live. Until then its Georgian pictures, Early Victorian mirrors and glass chandeliers, red-velvet seats and marble-top tables recalled the appointments of every place of public resort for a couple of generations. Harking back to the Royal Adelaide Gallery, the Brothers Gatti adopted a style of mural decoration which Swiss-café proprietors of lesser aims uniformly copied. This was a well painted representation of the fruits of all countries in rich profusion and chalets perched on the sides of snow-capped mountains. Since the advent of cinematography and the consequent springing up of luxurious palaces of pleasure, the internal embellishment of our cafés and restaurants has made vast strides.

Though outwardly presenting the same features as it did when Horace Walpole described the new edifice in a letter to Lady Ossory as "A Winter Ranelagh," the Pantheon, in Oxford Street, now the headquarters of Messrs. W. and A. Gilbey's world-renowned wine business, has undergone many transformations, and even surpassed the Royal Adelaide Gallery in respect of its vicissitudes.

Designed by James Wyatt on a scale of unexampled splendour and functionally opened in December 1772, the Pantheon affected to be "A Place of Evening Entertainment for the Nobility and Gentry." A notice at the Poland Street entrance proclaimed it to be "Reserved for Ladies' Chairs Only." As a means of ensuring exclusiveness, the proprietors fixed the season's subscription at six guineas, and vetoed all applications that were not recommended by Peeresses. Concerts, balls and masquerades regularly took place. For several years the utmost success, due to the patronage of the Prince Regent and his Royal brothers, attended the Pantheon, but its glories were destined to fade. Ladies of easy virtue began to rub shoulders with the nobility. How they succeeded in obtaining admittance no one knew. Thereupon subscriptions fell off to such an extent that the "Winter Ranelagh" proved anything but a lucrative concern.

Exhibitions of various kinds were later held within these walls. Lunardi's Balloon attracted a great concourse of sightseers in the year 1784. Fortified with the Lord Chamberlain's licence, a Mr. O'Reilly opened the Pantheon as the King's Theatre in 1790. A season of Italian Opera early in the following year again drew the World of Fashion, but the fate of most playhouses overtook it in January 1792. Fire destroyed everything save the outer shell. After a fresh spurt of theatrical management, the Pantheon degenerated into a second-rate concert-hall and general show-place. By July 1832 the proprietors went into bankruptcy and the property was sold at public auction for £13,000.

"Last scene of all in this eventful history" was the conversion of the Pantheon into the same state as we now behold it, the great stained-glass dome affording an excellent light for the exhibits in a combined Bazaar and Fine Art Gallery. Its principal floor, reached by the original flights of stone stairs from the spacious vestibule, may be truly regarded as the largest and finest counting-house extant; while that below is the printing department, where nearly two hundred operatives are regularly employed. Messrs. Gilbey's acquisition of the once fashionable Home of Terpsichore took place in the year 1867.

Literary interest also attaches to the Pantheon. On the steps beneath its noble portico Thomas De Quincey found many a night's shelter during that terrible period of his youth when he tramped "stony-hearted Oxford Street" with Ann, that "daughter of the people" who befriended him. Could anyone have foretold that the starving boy would in happier days become a famous essayist and give to the world *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater*?

Since Willis's Rooms in King Street, St. James's, ceased to be a restaurant, their departed glory has slipped from public ken. As a *locale* for subscription dances, fashionable entertainments, banquets and political meetings they enjoyed a world-wide repute. Opened on February 12, 1765, by James Macall, a Scottish tavern-keeper, who, by a felicitous inversion of his name made it Almack, these Assembly Rooms maintained their just renown for the greater part of a century. Such, indeed, was the exclusiveness of Almack's that to gain admittance through the favour of its seven lady patronesses constituted a social distinction almost as highly prized as being presented at Court. Here, in July 1821, took place the Coronation Ball of George IV, which the King himself, his brothers, the Duke of Wellington and the Duc de Gramont honoured by their attendance. Many celebrated singers, including John Braham and Mrs. Billington, gave concerts within these walls, and in 1844 Charles Kemble held an aristocratic audience enthralled with his Shakespearean Readings.

When, in 1843, the Thatched House Tavern was demolished, the Dilettanti Society, which had long met here on Sunday evenings, removed to Almack's and adorned its walls with a fine collection of portraits, three of them from the brush of Sir Joshua Reynolds. These are now hung in the Society's new home at the Grafton Galleries. Renamed Willis's Rooms in the year 1863, the place lost no tittle of its time-honoured prestige. Among other notable gatherings which might be cited, it was the scene of the farewell banquet given to Charles Mathews on January 10, 1870. Nineteen years later a sale of the property realized £23,000. As a restaurant and Supper Club, opened in 1893, it at first achieved considerable success, but the springing up of similar resorts round the West End proved inimical to permanent prosperity. Now Willis's Rooms afford us one more example of bygone fame, albeit the exhibition and sales of works of art on the same spot, contiguous to the St. James's Theatre, does not necessarily imply a falling off from a nobler state.

Not every Londoner who has occasion to visit Messrs. Puttick and Simpson's well-known Auction Mart on the west side of Leicester Square may have an inkling that he actually sets foot in the residence of Sir Joshua Reynolds. The commodious apartment in which so many important sales are effected under the hammer was the famous painter's studio, where royal and aristocratic sitters made time hang heavily upon the hands of their chairmen in the entrance-hall. At the foot of the stone staircase the outwardly curved iron balustrade still betrays a wise thought for the enormous hoops worn by the ladies, and in the front room to the right Dr. Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, David Garrick and Edmund Burke frequently met to dine. In later days, Reynolds's studio became a show-place for "The Invisible Girl"—a precursor of the modern "Vanishing Lady"—and last of all, before being given up to Auction Sales, it formed the Lecture Theatre of the Western Literary Institute.

A tablet on the front of the Villa Villa Restaurant, in Gerrard Street, indicates the residence of Edmund Burke. Its literary associations, therefore, are such as to set great store by. Here a jovial band of penmen styling themselves "The Merrymakers" meet once a month to dine in the spirit of true fellowship. Nor are these the only Bohemians who make it the scene of a bountiful "spread." As a rendezvous for authors and artists this is perhaps the most notable of any in the foreign quarter.

With the single exception of the Pantheon, the final stage in the public history of a renowned indoor resort has always been a restaurant. Such, too, was the case of Crosby Hall, Bishopsgate. A more fitting location for this transplanted City relic than the Chelsea Embankment could not have been chosen. It stands in a portion of Sir Thomas More's own garden, which, enclosing a gabled house built for himself, extended half-way up what is now Beaufort Street towards King's Road. Hither he retired into private life after handing over the seals of office as Lord Chancellor of England at Lincoln's Inn in 1532; and hence he was conveyed by water to the Tower, there to lay down his head on the block for stoutly refusing to countenance his Sovereign Lord's usurpation of the Papal authority. More's connection with Crosby Hall embraced the period from 1516 to 1523. In the latter year he sold the princely Bishopsgate residence to his "dear friend" Antonio Bonvici, a merchant of Lucca, who became the recipient of a pathetic farewell letter scrawled with a piece of charcoal in the Tower dungeon on the eve of More's execution.

A long chapter might be written about Crosby Hall. It was built by Sir John Crosby, a wealthy grocer and woolstapler, in 1470, upon land leased from the neighbouring Priory of St. Helen's Here, after the death of its owner, Richard, Duke of Gloster, took up his abode while he planned the murder of the Infant Princes in the Tower and his own accession to the throne. Later distinguished residents of Crosby Hall were (as we have seen) Sir Thomas More, Sir John Spencer, whose daughter eloped from it with the future Earl of Northumberland, concealed in a baker's basket, several Lord Mayors in succession, and, most worthy of all, the Dowager Countess of Pembroke, "Sydney's sister, Pembroke's mother," immortalized by Ben Jonson's epitaph.

After having been by turns a temporary prison for "malignants," a Dissenters' Meeting House and a packers' warehouse, the historic edifice was rescued from the degradation into which it had fallen by the efforts of the trading community round Bishopsgate in 1831; and a subsequent public appeal provided the means of restoring its original beauty. Between the years 1842 and 1860 Crosby Hall was utilized as a Literary Institute. Both Charles Dickens and the late Sir Henry Irving gave public readings within its walls. Down to 1907, when the Directors of the Bank of India, Australia and China purchased the site, it enjoyed a long spell of prosperity as a high-class restaurant. How all attempts to save the fine old fabric from demolition ended everyone in the City knows. While the timbered frontage—the only vestige of Tudor domestic architecture left for antiquity hunters to feast their eyes upon—had perforce to be sacrificed, the stones of the great Hall or "Throne Room," in which the Duke of Gloster had caused himself to be crowned King of England prior to repeating the ceremony at York, were carefully preserved and stored away in a builder's yard until they could be pieced together again in More's Garden at Chelsea. Exactly as it appeared during the turbulent reign of the Crook-backed Monarch and through the centuries down to our own time, Crosby Hall, situate at the corner of Danvers Street, facing the Thames, may be visited any day, and on Sundays after three o'clock, on application to the Warden .of the adjacent City of London University Hall.

A fondness for the antiquated order of things seems to sway the minds of some Clubmen. Due to the initiative of a former secretary, Mr. Comyns Platt, the rooms of the Nineteen Hundred Club, in Pickering Place, St. James's Street, were fitted up exactly in the same style as they appeared during the Regency, when Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, Beau Brummell and Count D'Orsay used them for high play and conviviality. Down to the minutest detail they suggest a Club House of the Georgian era. Wooden logs burn cheerfully in the fire-grates, an old blunderbuss hangs over the mantelshelf, pewter dishes characterize the table-ware, drinking-goblets take the place of glasses, and long clay pipes those of the modern species. To crown all, the steward, who is a retired Naval Service man, disports himself in a Georgian costume with grey silk stockings, buckle shoes, lace stock and full-bottom wig. The old-world charm of this sequestered retreat admits of no denial.

Pickering Place, with its sundial, preserves the memory of the founder of the famous wine business of Berry Brothers, which is still carried on in front of it. Their cellars extend half-way under St. James's Street, and the back parlour facing the little court was in the "high and far-off times" used for gaming, a boy being always stationed in the window recess to give the signal in case of a raid. Inside the old shop may be seen the large weighing scales and several bulky registers containing the signatures of celebrated personages from the year 1765 downwards, who, whilst giving orders for wines, improved the occasion by ascertaining their correct weight. Amongst others of especial interest are those of the five sons of George III, Louis-Philippe, Beau Brummell, Louis Napoleon, the Duke of Queensberry ("Old Q"), Lords Byron, Lytton, Palmerston and Beaconsfield, and "the Greatest Commoner in England," Mr. Gladstone. The upper storey, where the Pickerings, Brownes and Berrys, all of the same family, lived for generations, is now occupied by the Italian Club.

Another distinctly old-fashioned Club House which has not marched with the times is Pratt's in Park Place, close at hand. As of yore, the suppers are served in the kitchen downstairs. This apartment has a large open fire-place, a curious mantelpiece, a dresser filled with salmon-fly plates, odd-looking furniture and rare prints. As the sole survivor of the old kitchen clubs of London, Pratt's commends itself to the privileged visitor as an interesting link with the past. Here, too, will be found a niche for the juvenile sentinel perforce requisitioned when the authorities were likely to make a raid on the gamesters. The dining-room, with its long table, is of Early Victorian aspect. All over the house are glass cases of stuffed birds and fish—mementoes of the sportsman-like tastes of the original members. Neither music nor damsels have ever disturbed the peaceful tranquillity of Pratt's. As throughout the year the midnight fire roars up the chimney, an ancient club servant toasts cheese and fries bacon in the traditional manner. For card-players cribbage still exercises the fascination of days gone by. Quaffing beer out of pewter pots marked "Pratt's, 1841," and retaining their old affection for a briar, which, when done with, is religiously returned to its own notch in the pipe-rack—these are among the things to be remembered about the staid "Old Boys," who seem strangely out of touch with the twentieth century.

From an antiquarian standpoint, Fribourg and Treyer's quaint old snuff-shop at the top of the Haymarket is "on a piece," as the Americans say, with the archaic appearance of Lock's, the hatter's, and of Berry Brothers' in St. James's Street. Of Swiss nationality, the founders of this famous business married English ladies, from whom the present partners, Messrs. George and W. Bridgman Evans, are lineally descended, and, like their forebears, they exercise a stout determination to preserve the original features of the old place. The ceiling retains the dust and smoke of nearly two centuries; while the great snuff and tobacco jars in the bay windows, as on the counter and wall shelves, conjure up visions of spruce dandies who must have mounted these same stone steps and grandiosely "taken the floor" when only the upper classes smoked or inhaled "the divine weed." Among other distinguished patrons of Fribourg and Treyer were the Kings of Hanover and Belgium, the Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge and the Duchess of Kent.

Touching Clubland once more, if the long-mooted widening of Piccadilly comes to fruition a little structure, the significance of which has probably never dawned upon any of the thousands who constantly pass by it, will be swept away. This is the high stout plank on iron supports set into the pavement outside the railings of the Green Park, just where they begin to turn off towards Constitution Hill. A bygone generation of Londoners referred to it as "The Pilgrim's Rest." That was before the advent of cheap omnibus fares, when it really served a useful purpose. Noting from a clubhouse window opposite how City porters going westwards with a heavy load habitually paused for breath at this spot, after the ascent of the road, a kind-hearted member had the convenient perch put up at his own expense, so that their burdens might be rested shoulder-high until they felt able to resume the journey. There was down to a few years ago a similar "Pilgrim's Rest" close to the wooden barrier on the north side of St. Paul's Churchyard.

The present-day tendency of tea-house proprietors to set apart "Rest Rooms" for customers who have been out and about shopping or sight-seeing is a very welcome one. This, however, does not meet the case of strangers who find themselves far removed from the busy hum of life. Year by year the public need of peaceful places of retirement corresponding to the old City churches becomes more pronounced. That the wise forethought of a beneficent lady now reposing in Eternal Rest has for many years provided a beautiful retreat of this nature with an ever-open door may be a revelation to the vast majority of Londoners themselves. Styled the Chapel of the Ascension, it stands back from the Bayswater Road, specifically in Hyde Park Place, and is within a few minutes' walk of the Marble Arch. The gift of Mrs. Russell Gurney, who was first led to carry out her design by seeing a little wayside chapel always open for rest and meditation at Florence, its exterior still denotes the familiar entrance to the disused burial-ground of St. George's Parish, Hanover Square, with the old mortuary chapel on one side and the caretaker's dwelling on the other, little enough though passers-by on a bus-top ever think of inquiring what the red-brick fabric may be. Two graven tablets affixed to the outer gate and also over the portal admirably convey the intentions of the foundress of the Chapel of the Ascension. One of them reads thus :

Passengers through the busy streets of London,
Enter this sanctuary for rest and silence and prayer;
Let the pictured walls within speak of the past,
Yet ever continuous, ways of God with man.

The "pictured walls," wholly innocent of a frame or even a dividing bead, all the handiwork of an eminent artist, the late Frederic Shields, are a joy to the eye and a balm for the troubled mind. There is no illustrated catalogue to purchase, no collection-box in evidence or fussy old verger armed with a wand to tip. Refreshing rest and absolute peace await the stray visitor to the Chapel of the Ascension. Through a side door from without he may enter the great burial-ground, now, alas! given up to allotments, and beneath a tree close to the west wall contemplate one of the few remaining tombstones—that set up in memory of the Rev. Laurence Sterne. As its inscription bears testimony, the author of *Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental Journey* passed away on September 13, 1768.

In many respects London is a city of surprises. One may have dwelt in it for a lifetime and still remain ignorant of those touches of rusticity which often burst upon the view of a zealous explorer. Down a little lane off the Brixton Road will be met with a windmill working as hard now as it did when put up in the year 1816. True enough, inquiry on the spot would elicit the information that the building of new houses round about took the wind out of its sails, which had consequently to be dismantled, but the installation of a gas-engine serves the same purpose to-day. But few people are aware that a blacksmith's forge in Stockwell Park Road has for its peculiar setting a pre-Reformation chapel with stained-glass windows. The existence of an ancient smithy in the City, with plenty of work for it, hard by the Charterhouse, finds its explanation in the horse-drawn market carts around Smithfield. Behind the sordid Blackfriars Road, amid cobble stones, may yet be seen cowsheds and all the appurtenances of a disused farm, while ancient timber houses along one side of Collingwood Street overlook the burial-ground of Christ Church. The re-thatching of a hayrick at Peckham not long ago created some amazement on the part of those whose attention was called to it. London's only example of a Thatched House at

Camberwell has already been adverted to in these pages. Whitefoot Lane, facing the Tiger's Head, on the Bromley Road, Catford, but a short distance from the Metropolitan side of the tram terminus, leads to a great field of waving corn. Wonderful to relate, wheat, oats and barley flourish in the God's Acre of St. James's Church, Jamaica Road, Bermondsey, amid the smoke and grime of London Town. Last, not least, in this category of unlooked-for rusticity, what now bears the style of the Old Farm House Salon, devoted to the exhibition and sale of antique furniture and works of art, where real farmhouse teas are served daily, was only a few months ago the chance discovery of a wanderer in Queen's Road, Bayswater.

DICKENS HAUNTS AND HOSTELRIES

IV

DICKENS HAUNTS AND HOSTELRIES

THERE are still some places in the Metropolis enshrined to the memory of Charles Dickens which, for lack of the needful knowledge, the compilers of the guide-books uniformly ignore. Even up-to-date chroniclers of London's literary associations do not seem to possess any acquaintance with surviving hotels, chop-houses, inns and taverns either mentioned in his works or frequented by him. This may occasion surprise. But most remarkable of all is the paucity of such information in the pages of those very authors who have chosen "Dickens Land" for their theme. One requires to be a genuine Dickens enthusiast to discover with infinite pains what Time has left us of his own haunts and the places identified with his fictitious characters.

In no book about London, seemingly, is the slightest reference made to Dickens's favourite dinner resort at the time when he occupied the editorial chair of *All the Year Round.* This was indisputably Carr's, on the north side of St. Clement-Danes Church, adjoining the entrance to Danes' Inn. A picturesque hostelry with a coaching yard and wooden galleries on three sides, it had always borne the sign of "Ye Olde Kynge's Heade"; but in Early Victorian days the great popularity of its host among legal luminaries round about gave rise to the substitution of the single name "Carr's" over the gateway.

The year 1903 witnessed the demolition of the ancient structure in the interests of the Strand Improvement Scheme. Special pains were, however, taken to preserve intact the "Dickens Room" upstairs at the rear. Its felicitous embodiment in the substantial stone pile which embraces the new Carr's, the London and County Bank and Danes' Inn House, reflects the utmost credit upon the architect and the building contractors. Allowing for the lantern intersection and the reduction of the oak wainscoting to three-fourths of its former height, this noble apartment is just the same now as when the creator of Mr. Pickwick, often with W. M. Thackeray by his side, dined in it after the labours of the day.

"If I desire a substantial dinner off the joint, with the agreeable accompaniment of light wine, both cheap and good," he wrote in *All the Year Round* for June 18, 1864, "I know of only one house, and that is in the Strand, close to Danes' Inn. There you may wash down the roast beef of Old England with excellent burgundy at two shillings a bottle, or you may be supplied with half a bottle for a shilling." This eulogy is as well deserved to-day as it was then, for Carr's has ever maintained the high prestige of its cuisine and wines. The menu card contains a view of the old hostelry and the portraits of Dickens and Thackeray dining together. Over the oak mantelpiece hangs a fine painting in oils of the former celebrity, while around are those of his well-known characters—Barnaby Rudge, Bill Sykes, Jingle, Sam Weller, Mr. Pickwick, Sidney Carton, Old Humphrey, Grandfather Trent and Little Nell.

The original substructure to the "Dickens Room," now converted into a comfortable smoking lounge and afternoon-tea room, should likewise be visited, on account of its interesting collection of playbills dating back to the reign of William IV. These exemplify the " star " system of the period by setting out the artistes' names opposite the *dramatis personæ* in different sized types according to their relative importance. They belong principally to Drury Lane, Covent Garden, the Haymarket, the St. James's and the Royal Victoria Theatres. From them one can see how generous was the entertainment provided for our sires and grandams. At the English Opera House two long dramas were presented. The curtain rose punctually at seven o'clock and did not finally descend until close on midnight. Hence it was small wonder that, after such strenuous attention to the stage, playgoers crowded into the supper-rooms, which a paternal Licensing Authority permitted to remain open until the break of day.

Rule's, in Maiden Lane, where Dickens spent his hours of leisure in such good company as Albert Smith, Douglas Jerrold, John Leech, Mark Lemon, Wilkie Collins and all the other literary lights of the period, has been noticed in the previous section of this work. At the Cheshire Cheese, too, in Dr. Johnson's own corner, he many a time partook of the famous PUDDING, drank the glorious punch and smoked a churchwarden. While neglecting all his other haunts, authors and journalists have written at great length about the storied tavern of Fleet Street.

Where Dickens habitually dined when, away from the City and the Strand, he had a keen eye for the oddities of human character round the West End, was a cosy chop-house, fully licensed, and displaying the lettered sign of The Sceptre, in Warwick Street, behind the Piccadilly Circus end of Regent Street. Unhappily, the expiration of its lease caused this two hundred years old house to close down on October 16, 1920. Until then Dickens's chair in the overhead room could be occupied by any diner seeking reflective privacy. Here he was wont to enjoy the best of food served in a homely, old-fashioned style, and also the port and claret which made the reputation of the place during the Regency, when it figured in sporting annals as a noted Sunday morning rendezvous for boxing bouts and cock-fights. Though its late licensee had ruled over the roast ever since the year 1873, *habitués* still clung to the old name, The Sceptre.

An interesting old snuggery not now enjoying the drink privilege, intimately associated with the future great novelist, bears the title, on an outer lamp, of The Chapter, and is specially called attention to by a modern facia sign, "Ye Olde English Tavern frequented by Charles Dickens," in New Street, off St. Martin's Lane. A framed appreciation of the cosy little place exhibited in the window, penned by a member of the Dickens family, affords instructive reading. It runs as follows :

> In the mid-thirties Hablot Knight Browne (who drew under the pencil-name of "Phiz," and who was rightly regarded as one of the artistic exponents-in-chief of the famous novelist's creations) attended the evening classes at the Life School in St. Martin's Lane, where he had a fellow student, William Etty, that exquisite painter of the nude, who later on was elected a Royal Academician. After leaving this now defunct School of Art, "Phiz" and "Boz," as Dickens then signed himself, fell into the practice of adjourning to a little tavern off St. Martin's Lane called "The Chapter." At this resort were for many nights discussed the illustrations that afterwards appeared in the immortal *Pickwick Papers*. Browne had barely attained his majority, and Dickens was very, very little his senior at the period of their visits to this Old London tavern, which was then, as now, noted for its abundant good fare and exceedingly moderate charges—considerations which were no doubt of no little consequence to the juvenile novelist and to the budding artist.

In the sense of a tavern, the Chapter exists no longer, since the operation of the Budget even before the War caused it to be voluntarily surrendered. No structural alterations have, however, at any time been carried out at the old place.

In the great bay window of what is now an extremely attractive luncheon-room at the White Swan, also situate in New Street, which runs between Covent Garden and St. Martin's Lane, the renowned English novelist—as the records of the house attest—was times without number a silent visitor. Here his *penchant* for frequenting public places where men gave loose rein to their tongues, unsuspicious of "a chiel amang them takin' notes," served him well. In this way he picked up much material for literary pabulum, and doubtless listened to some of those narratives which characterize his earlier works. The White Swan cannot be less than three hundred years old. Originally a coaching inn amid open fields, with only the parish church and the neighbouring Convent, which gave its name of Covent Garden to the district, detracting from the rural environment, its once extensive proportions have been sadly encroached upon. The commodious luncheon-room, which down to the year 1916 was one of the very few tavern smoke-rooms left in the Metropolis, contains a quaint fire-place and overmantel cast all in one piece, valued at a hundred pounds. According to documentary evidence in the possession of its present licensee, the White Swan was a noted Masonic Lodge during the reign of George II. This lady has also brought to light a beautifully illuminated menu card of the historic house for the Jubilee Year of the late Queen Victoria, in which special stress is laid on the cuisine, table service, and hotel accommodation for strangers. Latterly the White Swan has had its frontage modernized, but the original wide passage at the side remains.

Just round the corner in Rose Street, a short turning off Garrick Street, Covent Garden, will unfailingly be seen the Lamb and Flag, a tavern in the best sense of that comfortable-sounding old term, the frosted windows of which display the "Holy Lamb," nimbus and flag, similar to that on the keystone of the Middle Temple Gateway, Fleet Street. Timbered alongside the narrow arched alley leading through into Floral Street, this is a quaint bit of Old London well worth visiting, particularly by admirers of Dickens, who refers to it several times in his writings. Its frequenters were chiefly Middle Temple lawyers—hence the peculiar fitness of the sign—who chatted and smoked in a dimly lighted back parlour where luncheons are now served. Dickens himself had a great affection for the place, and it has undergone no change since his time. Like her late husband, the hostess is averse to improvement, rightly thinking that a house honoured by the creator of Mr. Pickwick should retain its original appearance.

Another interesting Dickens resort, the Hercules Pillars, proclaims itself at the bottom of Manette Street, on the west side of Charing Cross Road. This old-fashioned tavern, which really fronts Greek Street, having a passage way thereto, conjures up memories of *A Tale of Two Cities*, as being close to the residence of Dr. Manette and his daughter, after whom the thoroughfare received its modern name. The gold-beater's sign at an adjacent house, also referred to in the novel, has long ago vanished.

Returning to the Strand, it is well known that the laying out of the present road in front of Trafalgar Square involved the demolition of the Golden Cross

Hotel of the old coaching days. Not one of our topographers, however, seems to be aware that the ancient arched entrance to the original coachyard, from which Mr. Pickwick and his friends set out in "The Commodore," on May 13, 1827, on their journey to Rochester, may still be seen in Duncannon Street, opposite St. Martin's Church. This narrow and by no means lofty archway called forth Jingle's solemn warning, "Heads, heads, take care of your heads!" followed by his jerky narration of its attendant disasters: "Terrible place—dangerous work—other day—five children—mother—tall lady, eating sandwiches—forgot the arch—crash—knock—children look round—mother's head knocked off—shocking, shocking!" David Copperfield alludes to the same archway and the early morning coach rumbling out of it, which, while asleep overhead, made him dream of thunder and the gods. Through it, as now seen, the Rochester Coach always passed. Not only the yard itself, but enclosed galleries belonging to three floors overhead and the original "booking office," where coach seats had to be secured in advance, still exist for the inspection of the curious. These, and some other integral portions of the Golden Cross Hotel incorporated in the rebuilt guest-house, are upwards of three hundred years old. Since the advent of railways the "booking office" has prolonged its activities as a goods and parcels receiving depôt. Surveying the Duncannon Street arch, one can readily conceive the need for Jingle's grave monition to the rooftop occupants of the lumbering coach.

Parenthetically, the somewhat modernized Prince's Head Tavern, two doors down Buckingham Street, across the Strand, was a noted rendezvous for the drivers and guards ("post-boys" possibly their correct description) whose stage-coach journeys began and finished at the Golden Cross. In its old-fashioned parlour always congregated the Wellers of the time to imbibe hot jorums of brandy and water. The modern pale spirit would not have been tolerated by them at any price. Deep brown was the natural colour of brandy in their opinion, and piping hot the mode of consuming it. But to proceed.

At the corner of John Street, facing the Strand, is the Adelphi Hotel, described by Dickens as " Osborne's," which it truly was down to the last half-century. The frontage has stood unaltered ever since the year of its erection on the site of Durham House, 1777. To name all the famous personages who have stayed at this retired guest-house would fill many pages. Here both the King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands died (of smallpox) in 1824, and three years later Thomas Rowlandson, the caricaturist. Writing to Lord Sheffield under date August 8, 1787, Edward Gibbon, the historian, notified his arrival from Lausanne at the Adelphi Hotel with the remainder of his manuscript, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, which he intended to publish immediately. Here also, when it had become Osborne's, stayed Isaac D'Israeli, the author of *The Curiosities of Literature*, to look around him for a settled abode after his honeymoon tour in 1802 ; and George Crabbe, the poet, with his wife whilst on a visit to London in 1813.

" Osborne's Hotel in the Adelphi " was just the kind of temporary home likely to be preferred by Mr. Wardle and his girls on coming up from the country to celebrate the reappearance of Mr. Pickwick after that iniquitous lawsuit which had made him an inmate of the Fleet Prison. Here Mr. Snodgrass found himself shut in an inner room, and the Fat Boy ran " some sharp instrument " into the amiable Mr. Pickwick's leg. The scene of the meeting and the five o'clock dinner ranks as one of Dickens's raciest chapters. Osborne's, too, is the very last home away from home mentioned in *The Pickwick Papers.* The Adelphi Hotel underwent much internal reconstruction during the years 1906-7, and at the same time had its greatly needed accommodation met by the acquisition of three adjoining houses in John Street. Commandeered by the Government during the War for official usage in connection with the Air Board, it was not released until the autumn of 1919. As evidenced at a Press Luncheon on December 4th of that year, the historic guest-house, while still featuring its valuable old oak furniture, has been brought thoroughly up to date with the addition of a public restaurant. For quiet comfort in a central location this hotel takes precedence of a bustling Americanized establishment.

The one place in the City's heart where Dickens enthusiasts at home and from across the seas are wont to assemble for refreshment and conviviality is the George and Vulture, in George Yard, Lombard Street. As an inn, the history of this sequestered fabric can be traced back more than six hundred years. Old Stow tells us that the George, which was the first name of the house, early in the twelfth century bore the arms of the Earl of Ferrers and constituted his residence. An atrocious murder taking place there caused the mansion to inspire awesome feelings and remain long tenantless, but subsequently it became "an inn much frequented by the nobility." The year 1524 witnessed the death of Richard, Earl of Kent, "in the inn's best room."

Already in 1283 the hostelry had merited renown as the centre of public life in the busy ward of Cornhill, whose inhabitants were for the most part wealthy drapers.

"Mine Host" at that time rejoiced in the style of an "Ale Draper." Whether or not this gave rise to the expression "a yard of ale" is uncertain. Chaucer was a regular frequenter of the George and Vulture. Lydgate and Skelton, other early poets, make various allusions to the inn by name.

According to a Percy Ballad, Jane Shore, the beautiful wife of a Lombard Street goldsmith, set out on her penitential walk to St. Paul's Cross and the Temple Stairs from the great inn close by. Sir Richard Whittington and his secretary, John Carpenter, were often to be found at the George and Vulture. In Elizabethan days plays were performed in its yard, and a dinner at this hostelry cost only sixpence. During the Parliamentary Wars and the Commonwealth excessive taxation almost ruined the London inn and tavern keepers, but the introduction of coffee into England brought to "Mine Host" in George Yard and St. Michael's Alley a renewed prosperity.

Rebuilt after the Great Fire, the George and Vulture maintained its proud prestige as the pioneer London coffee-house. The familiar name which still clings to it is Thomas's. Oddly enough, this, the first house where coffee was sold in England in the year 1652, and the second, Groom's, the successor of Nando's, and originally part of the Rainbow, in Fleet Street, belong to the same proprietor, who holds the ancient coffee-making recipe. As the City resort of poets, wits and satirists, the George and Vulture was on a par with Will's Coffee House in Covent Garden. Removed but a stone's-throw from Change Alley, it was the only convenient "house of call" during the excitements of the South Sea Bubble. Later, many heated debates on the Peninsular War took place within its honoured walls. And so we come down to the nineteenth century, by which time the George and Vulture had achieved fresh renown as a coaching inn. In this character Dickens has imparted to it undying fame. To descant at great length on "Ye Olde Pickwickian Hostelrie" is wholly uncalled for. What does not appear in any London guide is a reference to the demolition, just thirty years ago, of the George Yard portion of the George and Vulture, where Mr. Pickwick found "very good and comfortable quarters" eastward of St. Michael's Alley. A palatial stone pile built for the New City Club, which afterwards became the Deutsche Bank, covers its site. Close to this stood Dr. Pinche's Academy, which suggested to Dickens the name of Tom Pinch, and where Sir Henry Irving and Sir Edward Clarke received their early education. Thus, shorn of its guest-house accommodation, the George and Vulture is in every other respect the same as men knew it in the days of the Merry Monarch. As of yore, chops and steaks are still served on hot pewter plates. The fact that, alone among the feeding resorts of the Metropolis, this interesting survival has passed through the successive stages of an inn, a coffee-house and a family hotel to a tavern-restaurant of high repute is worth noting. If beds cannot now be commanded, it is because the feeding of several thousands of citizens daily taxes the entire resources of the establishment.

Small wonder that the Dickens Fellowship, the City Pickwick Club and the Atlantic Union, composed of Dickensians in the United States and Canada, have made the George and Vulture their headquarters. Once a year there is a costume banquet, when a great punch-bowl and churchwarden pipes are in evidence. Mention must also be made of the Pickwick Coaching Club, which annually takes its members for a week's tour in four-in-hands round the country at large with a special view of putting up at genuine Dickens inns. On such occasions they assume Pickwickian names, and woe betide him who addresses his fellows by any other appellation !

Memories of *Pickwick* and *Barnaby Rudge* are revived by a visit to the Spaniards on Hampstead Heath, where Mrs. Bardell's arrest took place and the Gordon rioters were "entertained" by the landlord as a means of frustrating their destruction of Kenswood House (see p. 55).

And now we come to the last and most fascinating of all the Dickens Haunts and Hostelries within easy reach of the pulsating heart of the Great City—the King's Head at Chigwell. Under the name of The Maypole Inn the creator of countless delightful characters has immortalized it. Had he not done so, Londoners would to-day remain oblivious of the existence, a short twelve miles out from Liverpool or Fenchurch Street Railway Stations, of such a charming old-world timber-and-plaster fabric, wholly left untouched by the mutations of Time since the reign of Henry VIII. For Chigwell is still the same peaceful village amid the Essex woodlands, with tree-embowered roads leading nowhere in particular, over which Charles Dickens lost his heart. In a letter to John Forster he wrote thus exultingly : "Chigwell, my dear fellow, is the greatest place in the world. Name your day for going. Such a delicious old inn, opposite the churchyard—such a lovely ride—such beautiful forest scenery—such an out-of-the-way rural place—such a sexton ! I say again, name your day."

By this time several monthly instalments of *Barnaby Rudge* had been published, and its author felt loath to allow the pleasure of a revisit—actually for the purpose of staying there awhile—to go unshared by his bosom-friend. "The day was named at once," Forster tells us, "and the whitest of stones marks it, in now sorrowful memory. Dickens's promise was exceeded by our enjoyment, and his delight in the double recognition of himself and of Barnaby by the landlord of the nice old inn far exceeded any pride he would have taken in what the world thinks the highest seat of honour."

Dickens came to the discovery of Chigwell in the course of one of those country-side rambles off the beaten track, where the coach-horn never resounded upon the ear, which he always made when a new work was shaping itself in his mind. He had long thought of the Gordon Riots as furnishing suitable material for fictional embellishment, but not until after hearing common talk of the destruction by fire of Loughton Hall (styled The Warren in the novel) did he chance to wander that way. Then the full glory of the King's Head burst upon his astonished view. In what manner he made haste to convert it into "copy" is shown by his vivid pen-portraiture of the inn at the very commencement of *Barnaby Rudge*.

Except that we cannot locate "an ancient porch, quaintly and grotesquely carved," this tallies exactly with its present-day aspect. Here are unmistakably "more gable ends than a lazy man would care to count on a sunny day," huge, fantastic chimneys, overhanging stories, drowsy little diamond-shaped glass panes in the bulging out lattice windows, sunken, uneven floors, blackened ceilings heavy with massive beams, and vast empty stables. Stepping inside, beneath the faded projecting sign, which is as lugubrious a representation of Charles I as imagination could possibly conjure up, we behold "the very snuggest and cosiest and completest bar that ever the wit of man devised." Neither has the "best apartment" undergone the slightest alteration since, according to the book, portions of which Dickens wrote on the spot, it formed the scene of the discussion of Sir John Chester and the owner of The Warren and of the meeting of Lord George Gordon with his secretary.

Quoting a portion of the text :

> It was spacious enough in all conscience, occupying the whole depth of the house, and having at either end a great bay window as large as many modern rooms, in which some few panes of stained glass, emblazoned with fragments of armorial bearings, though cracked and patched and shattered, yet remained ; attesting by their presence that the former owner had made the very light subservient to his taste, and pressed the sun into his list of flatterers, bidding it when it shone into his chamber reflect the badges of his ancient family and take new hues and colours from their pride.

On all other counts—oak wainscotings, the archaic fire-place, deep recess, low ceiling and genuine furniture of the period of the Martyred King—the appurtenances of this "Chester Room" comport with one's conception of a Stuart dwelling. In such a reposeful environment, viewing the silent, narrow street, with the churchyard on the one side and the pretty garden on the other, is to experience a new-born joy. Only when a coaching or a motor *char-à-banc* party draws up at the portal—a frequent occurrence throughout the summer—are there any signs of life.

That the King's Head could not have been built for an inn seems evident from Fisher's *Forest of Essex*. During the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, this local historian avers, the sittings of the Court of Attachment, or Forty-Day Court, presided over by the Bailiff of the Forest for the election of officers, and, it would appear also, the granting of licences to hunt, took place “at the house of Bibby,” Chigwell, but in and after the year 1713 the place of meeting was clearly stated to be the King’s Head. Says he: “In this quaint and pleasant inn may still be seen the room in which the Court of Attachment was held (the Chester Room), and also an arched recess in the cellar made to hold the wine which served for the revels of the officers of the Forest after the graver labours of the day.” His citation of an entry in the rolls of this Court for 1723 is likewise interesting: “Ordered, that every person that has the permission of a Lycense to shoot, hunt, etc., in the Forest of Waltham, before he be permitted to enter the same, shall pay to the Officers of the Court, when the same shall be entered, three dozen of wine.”

A pleasant walk of a mile from Chigwell Railway Station between upland fields leads one straightway to the inn. A lumbering wagon and horses beside the stone mounting-blocks on the curb may betoken gentle swains refreshing themselves within. Otherwise, bathed in the noon-day sun, the village street is quite deserted. The tranquillity of the scene whilst taking lunch at Dickens’s own table in the front bay window of the Chester Room is indescribable. Afterwards, surveying the ivy-mantled walls of the old fabric from the garden lawn and leafy summer arbours, where teas are served, puts the finishing touch to true contentment.

At one end of the King’s Head, yet in strict keeping with its general design, the present licensee has made a modern addition—the Concert Hall. Equipped with a stage, this accommodates an audience of three hundred. When the members of the Dickens Fellowship, the City Pickwick Club and the Atlantic Union drive down to Chigwell, they like to finish up the day with a little rousing vocalization. Nor is this all. Now and again "Mine Host" of the King's Head organizes a concert and dance for the especial entertainment of the local gentry. As regards sightseers from far away, he can seat eighty for luncheon or dinner in the Chester Room. During the London season, when parties of Americans, after visiting the Cheshire Cheese and other memorable places dear to the antiquity-hunter's heart, mayhap receive from a cicerone some hint of the delights of the King's Head, Chigwell, they keep its kitchen staff busy on arrival. Of course, the prosaic, modern-looking Maypole, at the foot of Chigwell Lane, a couple of miles away, has not the remotest connection with Dickens or the Gordon Riots.

TAVERN CURIOSITIES

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TAVERN CURIOSITIES

TAVERNS which yield the casual visitor something instructive or pleasing to while away the time over can now rarely be met with. In the whole of London only four of the Museum order have been spared to us. These are the Wheatsheaf, facing "Gardner's Corner," Aldgate; the Hole-in-the-Wall, close to Marshalsea Lane, in the Borough High Street; the Union, better known as "Cook's Museum," at the corner of Vassall and Camberwell New Roads; and the Marquis of Granby, at the foot of Lewisham High Road, New Cross. At each of these an hour might be profitably spent over inspecting the multifarious objects of interest. The third-named is chiefly given up to ornithological specimens brought from all parts of the world. There was formerly a quite celebrated museum tavern, the Edinburgh Castle in Mornington Road, Camden Town, but after the death of its proprietor all the exhibits were dispersed, and the historic Balaclava Bugle, now in the United Services Museum, Whitehall, became the property of the nation at a cost of five hundred pounds. Strangers to the district happening on the Edinburgh Castle would probably be surprised to find that its old-time tea, or rather beer, gardens, with rude wooden "boxes" ranged along one side, still attract goodly custom on summer evenings. Here also may be seen the stump of Aldgate Pump, centuries old.

While the latter-day tendency is to make saloon bars alluring to *habitués* in a decorative sense, one can appreciate the efforts of some tavern-keepers to captivate the eye by different means. At the Coach and Horses, in St. John's Street, Clerkenwell, will be found a natural fernery. Although the available ground space does not exceed ten feet square, this saloon creation of the landlord himself, replete with ferns, wild-flowers, a fountain, rustic steps and a fish-pool, strikes a novel note. The George, in George Court, West Strand, which leads direct into the quiet region of the Adelphi, affords us the only example of a saloon aviary, where canaries and finches have their perches. Many local tradesmen make this their daily luncheon resort on account of the joyous song of the feathered tribe close at hand.

A "Garden Restaurant" in connection with licensed premises is also a novelty. At the Railway Hotel, in Atlantic Road, Brixton, one can command luncheons, teas and suppers amid very pleasant surroundings. The enamel lettering over the side entrance and the information set forth on the front windows, however, seem a trifle misleading, since nothing like a garden wall presents itself to the view of the curious, way down the narrow turning. Neither would the description "Winter Garden" prove more correct. There are no plants whatever in this glass-roofed saloon-bar annexe, which was of old a billiard-room. Instead, well painted Swiss scenery on the walls conveys a capital impression of refreshing oneself in a mountain chalet. The neatness of the table service conjures up visions of a Cook's Excursion, and the absence of a drinking-bar adds a zest to the imaginative prospect. Yet, because it is located off the principal thoroughfare, the majority of residents in the district remain ignorant of the attractions of this so-called "Garden Restaurant."

What bears the name of "The Clan Tartan Room," on the first floor of the Scotch Stores, almost at the corner of Milford Lane, East Strand, would well repay a visit. Many Londoners are quite unaware of its existence, often though they may have sipped good spirits at the bar belowstairs. This is actually one of the first places sought out or inquired for by the "Braw Scot" when he comes up to Town. Its unique collection of tartans belonging to every known clan has been discussed throughout North Britain. These take the form of panels reaching from ceiling to floor, separated by gold beading. The specimens number forty-eight. The position of honour is naturally assigned to the Royal Stuart, midway over the fire-place. Scotsmen in London make this room their regular rendezvous, and whenever a moot point on the subject of tartans arises, they can here settle it authoritatively. Little enough would anyone opine that the archæologist could learn something from a visit to a whisky store! Theatrical costumiers owe much to "The Clan Tartan Room." In proof of this statement, the absolute correctness of the "dressing" in the late Sir Herbert Tree's production of *Macbeth* at His Majesty's Theatre still lingers in the memory of playgoing enthusiasts.

Whosoever walks along the Strand, or down Southampton Street from Covent Garden Market, cannot fail to notice a glass facia sign, illuminated after dusk, of "The Coal Hole." This gives the name to a palatial block of stone buildings comprising the Oak Wine Room and the Wolf Room, of which Messrs. Patrick and McGregor are the licensees. In the basement at the rear, reached by the steps of Carting Lane, are the public, private and saloon bars, which especially commend themselves to the humbler patrons of the Savoy Theatre. The Strand portion of the subterranean area takes us back in spirit to the historic "Coal Hole," originally so styled from being the nightly rendezvous of the coalheavers working on the Thames shore close by, and where, in May 1815, Edmund Kean, then at the zenith of his popularity, founded the Wolf Club.

Its first members were a set of jovial spirits, fond of a bottle and a rousing song, not in any way connected with the stage. But soon the great tragedian gathered around him all the best-known actors of his time. Once Lord Byron ventured into the Coal Hole, but beat a hasty retreat with the reflection that its company was too merry to suit his mood. Another literary celebrity who, contrariwise, had a particular liking for the place was William Makepeace Thackeray. Whenever possible, he would drop in about midnight to enjoy a Welsh rarebit and listen to the glee singing. According to some of his biographers, it was this famous night-house, rather than the Cyder Cellars or Evans's Supper Rooms, which he had in mind when penning a description of "The Cave of Harmony" in *The Newcomes*.

Apart from the vocalization which paved the way for the old-fashioned tavern sing-song presided over by a chairman, the Coal Hole came into notoriety during the Fifties of Queen Victoria's reign as the *locale* of "Judge and Jury Entertainments"—the invention of a certain "Baron" Nicholson, who had successfully exploited them on Sunday evenings at the Garrick's Head, in Bow Street. These were nothing less than a parody on Divorce Court Proceedings, with himself on the Bench, a "protean witness" named Brookes, who was an adept at making up and quick-change dressing, sham barristers and a jury empanelled from amongst the audience. The mingled humour and dignity with which the "Baron" ruled over his mock Court was irresistible. When, in the year 1858, he removed his "show" to the Cyder Cellars in Maiden Lane, the Coal Hole became once more a hall of song on "free-and-easy" lines. As is well known, the original Coal Hole was situated a little further east, and really formed part of the old Simpson's, down Fountain Court, before the Strand Improvement Scheme made a clean sweep of time-honoured buildings. Nevertheless, as a charming retreat from the summer's heat and the winter's cold—the cosiest, airiest and most comfortable snuggery imaginable—it has given rise to a London catch-phrase, "Meet me at the Coal Hole."

Restful places of assignation like the foregoing are now, indeed, few and far between. The Premier Wine Bar, in Dover Street, Piccadilly, has a kind of winter garden underground, a stall where you can choose your own lobster, a hairdresser's room, and a rack for your letters. Something like a rendezvous partaking of the nature of a club without a subscription list, for habituals! A delightful underground snuggery at the Royal Oak, Westbourne Grove, is called attention to by a sign, "The Dive." Half a century and more ago this was the popular description of a basement eating-house purveying cow-heel, tripe, liver and bacon, sausages and mashed potatoes, etc., whose customers, unable to afford anything better, were addicted to the saying "I'll take a dive for dinner!" Of City taverns featuring the select bar beneath the street pavement, there are but two—the Albion, near Ludgate Circus, and the Railway Tavern, just outside Fenchurch Street Station. Space limitations at the Grapes, in Lime Street, relegate its saloon bar to the first floor.

In these days the term "Wine and Spirit Vaults," like that of "The Shades," hardly ever bears out its true meaning. A unique example of such a retreat in the very heart of the City, and much more often happened upon by accident than by patient search, is the cellar annexe of the newly rebuilt Hole-in-the-Wall in Mitre Court, which lies between Wood Street and Milk Street, off Cheapside. To approach this cellar itself, the visitor must descend a flight of stone steps surmounted by a lamp over the iron railings in the very centre of the open Square. While the tavern dispenses only wines and malt liquors and cannot be said to possess a "saloon," the underground snuggery is stocked with spirits, which may be sipped at leisure in an alcove at right angles to the serving-counter. Those of an antiquarian turn of mind will be interested to learn that this is a veritable relic of the Wood Street Compter, where hapless debtors of old were wont to be held in durance vile. As is the case with so many other interesting places of archæological significance, not a single book about London makes the slightest reference to it.

Among tavern curiosities in a structural sense there can be none to compare with the Feathers, better known as "No. 1 Waterloo Road," on the south side of Waterloo Bridge. This really merits the description of one public-house built on the top of another. *Habitués* or casual customers entering on the ordinary street-level would never suspect that it contains a complete set of bars and also an upper story in Commercial Road, which runs under the arch parallel with the Thames bank. Discovering them, a wag might circulate a report that the prices for drinks down there are lower than those in the Waterloo Road! Erected with the bridge, which was ceremoniously opened on the second anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, June 8, 1817, this tavern has stone stairways throughout, panelled rooms, a quaint old-fashioned kitchen of vast dimensions, and ample storage for spirits beneath the adjacent arch.

Opposite the Surrey Theatre, in Blackfriars Road, stands a humble little green-fronted tavern bearing the sign of the Surrey Arms, but familiar to the denizens of South London as "The Halfpenny House." Down to the outbreak of the War its two public bars were always full, and grateful to the landlord must have been many a poor man who could here enjoy a drink and a smoke at a much cheaper rate than elsewhere. Unfortunately, owing to excessive licence duties even then, the concession extended only to beers and tobacco. Less then ten years ago Mr. Sam Hume was able to purvey wines and spirits as well as malt liquors (of course in small measures) on the same hospitable lines. But always, until the ex-Kaiser's dream of World Domination turned the whole of Europe topsy-turvy, it was possible to serve mineral waters, "ponies" of ale or stout, small cigars, screws of shag, ham sandwiches, bread and cheese and other wholesome food snacks to penurious wayfarers or "out-of-works" for a halfpenny. With prices still soaring, it goes without saying that the Surrey Arms, which exists to-day merely as a beerhouse, will not soon return to the old order of things. The more's the pity.

A time-honoured City tavern, the Castle, facing Farringdon Street Railway Station, at the corner of Cowcross Street, enjoys the unique distinction of being also a licensed pledge-shop. Its three-sphered symbol of the abode of one's avuncular relative, thrown into bold relief by the official document which is renewed each year, surmounts the doorway of the landlord's private room behind the bar. Here, in any part of the "house," a needy mortal can negotiate a loan upon his personal belongings without first calling for refreshment. Such a convenience must have proved a boon and a blessing in those now far-off days when inns and taverns could remain open until half past twelve, and good easy men found themselves run out of cash late at night with a walk of several miles home in prospect.

How the Castle came to be invested with money-lending powers was as follows. It chanced that on a certain occasion George IV, after attending a cockfight *incog.* at Hockley-in-the-Hole, just off Clerkenwell Green, applied to the landlord, and not in vain, for a temporary loan on the security of his gold watch. To the utter amazement of that obliging Boniface, he a few days later received a Royal Warrant conferring upon him the right to lend money on pledges, and ever since the pawnbroker's licence has been posted up behind the three little gilt balls over the parlour doorway at the Castle. There are references to this "house" with a dual licence in the pages of Dickens. Old Clerkenwellians have a distinct recollection of a special pledge counter in the unaltered Jug and Bottle Compartment and advances made on wearing apparel. Nowadays the business is conducted less promiscuously, or rather with a view of obliging a regular customer after the pawnbroker's closing hour than as a source of profit for the licensee of the Castle.

"Dirty Dick's," in Bishopsgate, has won a world-wide celebrity. The story attaching to the "D.D. Cellars," which are the same as those belonging to "Ye Olde Port Wine House" established in the year 1745, is that Nathaniel Bentley, one of the sprucest young men in London, was engaged to be married to the daughter of a wealthy citizen. A little while prior to the happy event, he invited the bride-elect and a party of friends to a sumptuous entertainment over his place of business. The friends came, but not the lady: Death had stepped in to prevent her. Poor Bentley took the tragic news so much to heart that he ordered the banqueting chamber to be locked up for the remainder of his lifetime. Moreover, he contracted miserly habits and never washed himself. After his death, which took place at Musselburgh, N.B., in 1809, the room was forcibly entered, when scores of rats that had consumed the feast lay mummified on the table and floor beneath the dust of forty years. These were carefully collected, together with the wine bottles and some personal relics of the miser himself, for exhibition in the "D.D. Cellars," where, undisturbed even by the rebuilding of the upper portion of the premises in the year 1870, they may be seen to-day.

As a matter of fact, Nathaniel Bentley never had the remotest connection with Bishopsgate, neither was he ever a wine-house keeper. If we turn to an authoritative book entitled *Celebrated London Characters*, it will be found that he kept an ironmonger's shop at No. 46 Leadenhall Street, close to the Old East India House. Until the landlord succeeded in turning him out of it in the year 1804, people generally referred to the place as "The Dirty Warehouse." The same thing happened to him in Jewry Street, Aldgate, whereupon he removed to Leonard Street, Shoreditch. Disposing of his business for a good round sum, he then led a wandering life, and eventually succumbed to a fever whilst putting up at a small Scottish inn. Meantime, the licensee of "Ye Olde Port Wine House" in Bishopsgate had bought up the contents of the Leadenhall Street banqueting chamber for a cellar attraction, and displayed a portrait done in oils of Dirty Dick by way of a sign. He it was—one Barker by name—who framed the set of rules for the conduct of the house which are printed in the little book handed to visitors at the "D.D. Cellars." With the exception of that relative to Sunday Closing, all these have long ago been rescinded. As a further proof that "Dirty Dick's" does not occupy its original site, a diligent search through the volumes of *Household Words*, in which some forgotten contributor wrote a versified account of "The Dirty Old Man," would bring to light the plain statement of his business activities in Leadenhall Street. Accordingly, the heading *A Legend of Bishopsgate*, as set forth on the "D.D. Cellars" presentation booklet, is altogether misleading. The relics are nevertheless perfectly genuine.

One might reasonably opine that a publican would be the very last man to discourage tippling and bar-loafing. Among the Curiosities of London, an ancient tavern held under a "free vintners'" privilege, once bearing the sign of the Ship, but generally spoken of as "Williams's," midway on the right-hand side of Artillery Lane, Bishopsgate, claims special notice. For more than sixty years its frequenters have been systematically denied the right to smoke, talk loudly, sit down, or call for a second drink. To be served again necessitates having been off the premises at least half an hour. Strangers who express themselves dissatisfied with the five arbitrary rules posted on the walls and printed on a handbill constituting the wines and spirits price list, are requested to take their patronage elsewhere. Touching the foremost of these, the new Licensing Act, which prohibits the sale of liquor to an intoxicated person, was anticipated by the senior Williams with most excellent results. His motto: "Refresh, pay, and travel on," has always been respected; and still the tide of custom flows to the old "house." On

Sundays particularly, when the neighbouring "D.D. Cellars" are closed, there is a constant stream of people passing in and out.

From what takes place every day on licensed premises, let us next turn to a hardy annual observance—the hanging of a hot-cross bun at the Widow's Son, in Devons Road, Bromley-by-Bow, E. Clustered together in the saloon bar there are now eighty-four of these burnt-offerings, so to speak, all but the last few quite black and tough, in memory of a young sailor who, embarking upon a long voyage, trusted to be home again before Easter and was presumably lost at sea. As long as she lived his fond mother laid aside for him a new bun on Good Friday, still cherishing hope of his return. After her death some pious hands collected these tokens of maternal affection and suspended them from a beam. Thenceforward the cottage became locally known as "The Bun House," where, incidental to the hanging of a fresh bun on Good Friday morning, large quantities of hot-cross buns were sold. In course of time it was pulled down and a tavern, styled the Widow's Son, rose on its site. Down to the last ten years, not only did the landlord present a new bun to *habitués* and curious travellers from afar, but he had all the poor children of the district lined up outside for a similar gift on Good Friday morning. The "hanging of the bun" constitutes a clause in the lease of the Widow's Son. It is an interesting little ceremonial, well calculated to preserve the tradition which clings to the spot.

One would hardly expect to meet with Old London Memorials at a Transpontine tavern. Perhaps the only licensed house nowadays which has a gas-jet handy for smokers, reminiscent of the little Punch figure on the counter before Swedish matches came into use, is the Red Lion at the corner of Westminster Bridge Road (No. 172) and the Lower Marsh. The tiny light here issues from the top of a miniature brass castle in the centre of some wrought-iron gates that divide the public and private bars. Painted a dull red and adorned with flowers and a human head, these originally stood across "The Road" end of the Lower Marsh, and none but soldiers were allowed to make a short cut through them to Waterloo and Blackfriars. When the Marsh came to be built upon, the new marketing thoroughfare was familiarly styled, as now, "The Cut," and the gates were purchased by Mr. Watchorn, the landlord of the Old Dover Castle, who, in keeping with the sign of his "house," added the serviceable Castle thereto for the express behoof of smokers. Many people still speak of the place as "Watchorn's." The erection of the modern Dover Castle Hotel at the opposite corner (No. 170) rendered a renaming of the older one necessary, to wit, the Red Lion.

Memorials of Old London thrust themselves upon public view in unexpected places. Into this category falls an interesting piece of sculpture comprising the Royal Arms which has been affixed to the façade of the King's Arms Tavern in Newcomen Street, off the Borough High Street. Unless the chance observer hurrying by takes the trouble to "inquire within," he will never guess, or even learn from books about London, that this identical stone carving adorned the gatehouse on the Middlesex side of Old London Bridge down to the time of the removal of the bridge itself for the building of the present one, which was opened by King William IV and Queen Adelaide on August 1, 1831.

A conspicuous gilt representation of the Royal Arms on the front of an old wayside inn, the Fox and Crown, at Highgate, perpetuates an incident in the life of our

Sixty Years' Queen, which occurred less than a fortnight after her succession to the throne of England. Beneath it is a large signboard worded as follows :

6TH JULY, 1837

THIS COAT OF ARMS IS A GRANT FROM QUEEN VICTORIA, FOR SERVICES RENDERED TO HER MAJESTY WHEN IN DANGER TRAVELLING DOWN THIS HILL.

According to the traditional account, the fact of there being no skid on the wheel of the young Queen's carriage attracted the notice of the innkeeper, who made a dash across the forecourt and so started the horses to run. At the imminent risk of his own life he pluckily averted disaster, but beyond permission to display the Royal Arms, nothing in the shape of reward for the heroic deed ever came his way. This reflection preyed upon his mind, and so far from finding the business prosper through the unique advertisement, possibly by reason of its wanton neglect, he died in penurious circumstances. Hidden away somewhere about the Fox and Crown, as at the Gatehouse and most of the other old inns of Highgate Village, are preserved the pair of horns at the head of a pike which entered into the quaint ceremony of "Swearing on the Horns."

One of the stone signs of London which has escaped the attention of topographers is the Bear and Rummer on a tavern at the corner of Mortimer and Well Streets, near the Middlesex Hospital, W. This mural sculpture depicts a bear hugging a large goblet-shaped drinking-glass anciently known as a "rummer." To the stone sign, dated 1546, let into the front wall of the Mitre, in the court named after it between Hatton Garden and Ely Place, and the stem of a cherry-tree in its corner window, reference has already been made in the opening section of this work.

Lovers of the genuinely antique may not be aware that some relics of the old Cock Tavern, in Fleet Street, which was demolished for the building of the Law Courts branch of the Bank of England, and had stood there since the days of Elizabeth, are preserved in the new tavern-restaurant of the same name across the way. These consist of oak panellings, a handsome fire-place with carved overmantel, and the original wooden-gilt cock, said to have been the handiwork of Grinling Gibbons, of which the present exterior sign is a replica. Rarely indeed do such treasures become transferred to the new structure when the fabric they adorned vanishes from public view. A similar note of satisfaction may be sounded in relation to the beautiful Elizabethan ceiling and chimney-piece yet to be seen at the Queen's Head in Essex Road, Islington.

Henekey's, in High Holborn, which runs alongside the ancient gateway of Gray's Inn, has been a noted landmark for more than two centuries. The precise year of its foundation was 1698. The frontage overhead may not strike an ordinary observer as archaic, but a walk down the wide passage into the lofty and spacious hall beyond, surrounded by huge vats, recalls a wine-house of other days. Here, in a line facing the counter, are the pew-like boxes in which our grandsires sipped their wine, while perched on high may be seen the huge lamps formerly used in the extensive cellars, stocked with casks and bottles of rare old vintages that reach far beneath the lawyers' chambers of Gray's Inn. During the Gordon Riots these cellars were turned to account as a place of refuge.

Plaisted's Wine House, No. 120 High Street, Woolwich, immediately opposite the Ferry Landing Stage, has remained unaltered ever since the year 1790. Its ceiling is low and black with age. Rowlandson's coloured cartoons of naval subjects, and bygone views of the town and the river, are in evidence along the side wall. At the extreme end of the sanded floor, enclosed by iron railings, are great casks of spirits. Altogether this is an interesting place to visit. Its only approach to modernity consists of an illuminated facia sign having the letters arranged perpendicularly. Plaisted's has always been noted for Nonsuch Gin, Plantation Rum, Barley Wine and Brown Stout.

Men of sporting instincts may like to know that the comfortable saloon of the Two Brewers, in Church Street, Greenwich, contains a portrait done in oils of Jem Mace, and suspended over it, his own fighting gloves, together with the model of a boat, the only one ever built minus a rudder, which made a successful prize run of a hundred and four miles from Oxford to Putney on April 22, 1901.

A propos of the tavern saloon, it has often been remarked by country excursionists that our luxurious bars and lounges, where "Parlour Prices" obtain, do not at all take their fancy like the comfortable and sedate "Smoke Room," in which a man might spend a whole evening over two or three drinks and read the illustrated weekly papers at leisure. In this respect London is far behind the provinces. Quite recently the chairman of a great brewery company stated at the annual meeting of shareholders how much he was struck by the comfort of the smoke-rooms in some of the North-Country taverns. All one had to do there was to touch a bell, and the waitress would bring whatever you ordered to eat or drink. Of course, it must be borne in mind that heavy rates and taxes and licence duties militate against the setting apart of extra rooms in London taverns *pro bono publico.* Indeed, such accommodation can rarely be provided at all.

Many of the best-patronized "houses" appear to have been squeezed in between other premises, so that the long narrow ground floor is wholly taken up by the partitioned bars, with the saloon evolved out of what was originally a back yard.

To locate a Smoke Room or its equivalent round London one must wander very far afield. The Marquis of Lorne, in Dalzell Road, Stockwell, features a "public room," and the Queen, in Bellesfield Road, Brixton, an elegantly appointed "Smoking Room." The Rockingham, opposite the Elephant and Castle, has an old-fashioned "Coffee Room," and that other South London Elephant and Castle, at Vauxhall, a superior off-room labelled "The Cabin." A hostelry with an abnormal frontage is the Crown, in High Street, Harlesden. This permits of its entire rear portion being divided up into three lounge-like apartments: the "Jubilee Retreat," a "Ladies' Bar," and a "Coffee Room."

A truly delightful snuggery, replete with green-baize tables, arm-chairs, ferns and box plants, pictures and illustrated periodicals, set forth on the glass door as the "Smoke Room," greets the chance dropper-in at the Nelson Arms, High Street, Merton, S.W. Assuredly this picturesque inn has the fullest claim to its title of any in the Metropolitan area. A well executed encaustic tile painting of Nelson's flag-ship, the *Victory*, adorns the exterior. But a stone's-throw from it is all that time has spared us of Merton Place—the four years' residence with his beloved Lady Hamilton of England's great naval hero until duty called him to rejoin the Fleet at Cadiz, never to return. While a street has been cut through the grounds of

Merton Place, and the Abbey Picture Theatre occupies the site of the coach-house, the old Lodge, now converted into workrooms for a Regent Street firm of silk mercers, next to it, may still be viewed with reverent feelings. Nearly all the streets which have sprung up round about bear names that bring home to one's mind great naval engagements of Nelson's days, and many of his relics are preserved in the parish church.

When, down to fifteen years ago, the Falcon Tavern stood on the north side of Knightrider Street, City, one could survey on its walls large oil paintings of Old London Bridge, Roasting the Rumps in Fleet Street, May Day with Jack-in-the-Green, The Morris Dancers, and other pictured memorials of the dim past. The only modern approximation to this style of mural embellishment presents itself at the White Lion, almost at the bridge foot of Putney High Street, where there are monster views of the original inn, the crazy old wooden bridge, and the one now spanning the Thames between Putney and Fulham.

The White Lion, Putney, was the scene of an outrageous hoax perpetrated by that prince of jokers, Theodore Hook. Calling in one day as a perfect stranger, he ordered an excellent dinner, with wines and delicacies, and when these had been disposed of, he offered to let the landlord into the secret of drawing both old and mild ale from the same barrel, provided it went no further. To illustrate this it would merely be necessary to take a gimlet into the cellar. Forthwith the pair descended the stone steps, where, at Hook's suggestion, the landlord bored a hole about half-way down one end of the barrel and placed his finger over it, while the stranger operated in like manner on the other end. Bidden to stop up that hole also, the landlord said he had forgotten to bring down a drinking-glass.

"What an unfortunate oversight!" quoth Hook. "But never mind, I'll go upstairs and fetch one." He went. The poor dupe waited patiently for a long time. Then he began to shout. All in vain. At last his wife came into the cellar with word that the diner had left the premises, saying nothing about the unpaid bill. Nevertheless, Hook was an honest man. Eventually he called and discharged his obligations for the dinner, whereupon all three of them laughed heartily over the joke.

If the opposite side to the Green Park stretch of Piccadilly is utterly devoid of public-houses, ample amends for their non-existence will be found in the old-world district of Mayfair, embracing Shepherd's Market, which lies just behind it. Here taverns abound. Two of them are noteworthy on account of their signs—the Two Chairmen and the Running Footman. The former recalls a bygone mode of street locomotion, the Sedan Chair, always a familiar object in the hall of a family mansion when not in use; and the latter (as shown by an excellent facia oil painting) a custom in vogue among carriage-folk, who deputed a liveried servant, armed with a staff of office, to clear the way for the progress of that lumbering thing, a coach. Like all the others, these taverns have for generations been the regular meeting-places of the male dependents of fashionable households round about.

Of the Running Footman there is no second example in London, but several other Two Chairmen can be met with. A strange combination, the Crown and Two Chairmen, reveals itself in Dean Street, Soho. This really originated from the practice of the bearers of Queen Anne beguiling the time over refreshment here while their Royal mistress gave sittings for her portrait to Sir James Thornhill in the still existing

Georgian house (No. 74) next door to the Royalty Theatre, immediately opposite. From this town mansion of the great Court painter his daughter eloped with the student, and afterwards equally great artist, William Hogarth, in the year 1729. Containing the original studio and the counterfeit presentments of various personages connected with Thornhill and his erstwhile pupil after the family reconciliation, it has within the last few years been completely restored. The original sign of the tavern could have been none other than the Two Chairmen.

An odd tavern sign in King William Street, West Strand, is the Final. This admits of a ready explanation. Twenty years ago its facia board displayed the name of William the Fourth. Barristers in particular who were wont to see "Toole in Three Pieces" at the little theatre opposite, and spent the long *entr'actes* at its refreshment bar, invariably crossed the road when the performance was over to "have a final" before parting company. Accordingly, the then landlord of the William the Fourth saw a virtue in changing his sign.

How few Londoners at large know the Man in the Moon, down a passage on the west side of Regent Street leading to Vine Street Police Station and Piccadilly? This is worthy of mention because framed in the saloon of the old house may be seen a rare engraving of Hogarth's once well-known sign, painted by him for a tavern in Oxford Street, "A Man Loaded with Mischief," and underscribed "Drawn by Experience, Engraved by Sorrow." *En passant*, this appears to be the only suitable place in the present work to recommend a visit to Hogarth House, Chiswick, close to the Thames and the churchyard, where he lies at rest, which, exactly in the same state as it was when he resided and painted there, contains no less than one hundred and thirty-five of his pictures. Beneath the old mulberry-tree in the garden, Hogarth used to sit with the children of his loving friends gathered around him. The extreme kindliness of Hogarth's nature was further illustrated by a rough stone set against the wall with an epitaph : "Alas, poor Dick ! 1760, Aged Eleven," over two cross bones of birds, a death's head and a heart, carved by himself in memory of a favourite bullfinch buried there. Due to its purchase in the year 1902 by Lieut.-Colonel Robert Shipway, Hogarth House has happily been spared from speculative builders to the nation and the world of Art. Therefore a pilgrimage to Chiswick should enter into the itinerary of those who set their hearts on "doing London" thoroughly.

Unquestionably the Man in the Moon had a Biblical origin, as set forth in Numbers xv. 32 *et seq.* Even more so might the Noah's Ark appear inappropriate for a place of public refreshment, suggesting as it does a dreary waste of water rather than alcoholic potations. A little reflection, however, would lead to a different way of thinking. As a matter of fact, this constituted the earliest pictorial tavern sign of which we possess any record, and for at least two hundred years it was by far the most common. Inspired, possibly, by the bush or bunch of ivy denoting a Roman wine-house and thereby paying honour to Bacchus, it came to be adopted throughout Christendom, very often in conjunction with the same Pagan symbol displayed at the end of a pole, as a characteristic reminder of the circumstances under which the life of the first planter of the vine had been preserved. In those deeply religious days, perhaps on account of the universality of this tavern sign, the Deluge was the favourite subject of the Church Plays performed by the parish clerks ; and long after it had yielded to other painted representations of Biblical history, the Noah's Ark still proclaimed to wayfarers a superior halting-place in contradistinction to an ordinary ale-house. As years rolled on, the arms of the nobility and the trade guilds, not to speak of royal portraiture, largely superseded such signs of scriptural import ; albeit everywhere stray examples of their progenitor were destined to survive. So far as London is concerned, these have by now dwindled down to five.

Memories of other days are revived by " Ye Olde Bun House," in High Street, Peckham. Though possessing a full drink licence, this has retained the time-honoured name—an odd one for a tavern. In the large room behind the bars youths and maidens capered nimbly at sundown while their elders spent the rest of the expiring day in the adjacent gardens. New milk, fresh buns, strawberries and cream and somewhat expensive tea were the staple refreshments at such junketings. As a holiday resort for the denizens of South London, the Peckham Bun House vied in popularity with the Grove House Tavern and its dance-hall in Camberwell Grove. Alas ! the gardens have long ago been built over, and the roar of traffic disturbs the common highway once belonging to a peaceful village.

A tavern sign likely to provoke comment by a stranger is the Coffee Pot, in Warwick Lane, City. Hanging from the ceiling over the bars are a couple of very old coffee-pots, said to have been in use at the original rendezvous when the wooden model of such a utensil was displayed outside as the symbol of sociability at all the London coffee-houses.

In Jamaica Road, Bermondsey, stands Lilliput Hall, a wide-fronted tavern with large upper windows and some external ornamentation. This dates back two hundred years, and was originally a licensed show-place for performing midgets. The Colleen Bawn, in Southwark Park Road, derived its sign from the phenomenally successful run of Dion Boucicault's Irish drama at the Adelphi Theatre. The World Turned Upside Down, close to the great railway goods station in the Old Kent Road, came into being contemporaneous with the much-talked-about discovery of Australia by Captain Cook. Down to the last few years there was suspended from a stout iron bracket on the façade a huge painted globe with the South Pole shown at the top. After having one of its glass sections broken, the pictorial device continued to sway with the wind until the effects of a terrific storm rendered the entire structure unsafe. Since then it has been replaced by an ordinary lamp. In the saloon will be found some curious prints headed "The World Turned Upside Down, or the Folly of Man." The sign of the Antigallican, at Charlton, on the Woolwich Road, affords a striking contrast to public sentiment nowadays, since it emphasizes the patriotism of our countrymen during the Napoleonic wars. A little further eastwards, in Church Street, Woolwich, that not unpicturesque wayside tavern, the Old Sheer Hulk, carries one back in spirit to the dismantled wooden ships lying close to the Thames shore just opposite, where the convicts, working in gangs and chained together by their ankles, were employed in various useful occupations for the benefit of the general community whose laws they had violated.

Across the river, the Two Puddings, on the Broadway, Stratford, E., is the only odd designation for licensed premises which need detain us further. This, denoting a combined restaurant and ham-and-beef shop, serving malt liquors to wash food down with, had its origin in a little incident that occurred long ago, when the house was a roadside tavern displaying the sign of the Wheatsheaf and noted for steak, kidney and mushroom puddings. As the story goes, two "Knights of the Round Table," members of the famous chess-playing coterie at Simpson's-in-the-Strand, dropping in here for refreshment, promptly ordered the dish of which they had heard such good accounts. When this came to be served, the landlord, who had been busy all day and unable to appease his own appetite, on seeing there were only two puddings left, decided to eat one himself and coolly advised the visitors to toss up for the other. In the end, after a heated argument, during which the landlord was, with knife and fork, letting the savoury juice run out of the reserved pudding, they agreed to share it.

Carved representations of those objects which have given "houses of call" their titles are now rarely to be met with in London. The Black Horse, in Rathbone Place, W., has a prancing steed over the exterior lamp. The White Lion, in High Street, Streatham, can be located a considerable distance away on either side by virtue of a rampant lion dangling from a bracket at right angles to the façade. An exceedingly well-cut representation of the world's largest animal surmounted by a howdah forms a conspicuous sign on the coping-stone of the Elephant and Castle, opposite the main entrance to Vauxhall Railway Station. Surviving examples of forecourt carvings on tall post-heads are the White Horse in High Street, Poplar, and the White Swan at Wandsworth. The Antelope in Kennington Road and the Red Lion in Harrow Road display well executed models of the animals named close to their roof-trees.

Another Red Lion, at the corner of Parliament and Derby Streets, Westminster, calls attention to a modern tavern-restaurant which took the place of that old tavern where the youthful Charles Dickens ordered a pint of "genuine stunning," to the great amusement of the landlord and his wife. In commemoration of this incident, as corroborated by the biographer of the great English novelist, the upper portion of the new structure displays a medallion of Dickens on its façade. In the luncheon saloon may be seen a framed newspaper account of the interesting association, together with a view of the old house.

The Cheshire Cheese beneath the iron railway bridge in Crutched Friars, E.C., has a large wooden cheese-loaf hanging outside ; while Henekey's Wine House at the pit entrance to the Lyceum Theatre in the Strand makes an overhead cask serve the purpose of a two-faced clock. Conspicuously perched on the coping-stone of the Coronet Hotel in Soho Street is a huge gilt coronet. A passing reference to a large gilt model of the barn fowl outside the Cock, facing the Palace Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, and another in Kennington Road, may be here made. Again, the Bird-in-Hand, 17 Long Acre, displays a fine pictorial glass sign, in strict keeping with its title, at right angles to the house-front. In contradistinction to all the foregoing, the life-size figure of a naval officer looking through a sextant as a sort of vane for the four points of the compass high up outside the Champion, in Wells Street, W., makes a novel departure. As a unique example of a painted sign, the Father Red Cap, on Camberwell Green, also claims notice. So far from perpetuating public memory of some historic personage (like the Mother Red Cap, whose bust appears over the modern hostelry named after her at Camden Town), this is merely the creation of an artist's fancy, depicting as it does a jolly brewer, in the red stocking-cap of tradition, about to quaff a pot of foaming ale. Finally, the Coach and Horses, on the west side of St. John's Square, Clerkenwell, which was rebuilt in the year 1898, displays on its frontage a large oil painting that had been affixed to the original inn, close to St. John's Gate, in commemoration of the Exeter Mail Coach being attacked by a lioness at Winterslow Hut, near Salisbury, on October 20, 1816.

From tavern signs we may fittingly turn to an interesting observance at a tavern Ordinary. Of equal celebrity with the luscious PUDDING at the Cheshire Cheese in Fleet Street is the daily Fish Dinner at Simpson's, in Bird-in-hand Court, Cheapside. This has commended itself to City men as a right royal repast ever since the year 1723. Not always on the same spot, because prior to 1811 the original Simpson, who knew more about edible fish than any other landsman could hope to, had earned just renown as a *restaurateur* in Bell Alley, Billingsgate. Members of the Coal Exchange and Custom House officials were his regular patrons on the old spot. The rebuilding of Billingsgate Market caused Simpson's to be absorbed; but the Queen's Arms in Cheapside, which at the time much resembled the Cheshire Cheese, opportunely offered itself for occupation. Mr. Simpson bought the ancient tavern, whither the Fish Ordinary was at once transferred; and Simpson's it has been to this day. In the year 1816 John Keats shared a lodging with his brother on its second floor, and here he composed the sonnet that will live for all time, "On First Looking into Chapman's *Homer*." In March 1898 Simpson's was consumed by fire. Thereupon Mr. Frank H. Callingham, who, as the host, had for several years been identified with the sequestered tavern and its exceptional fare, caused it to be rebuilt on quite modern lines. A stranger passing along Cheapside would hardly suspect the existence of such a luxurious luncheon resort up a court. But Simpson's is known all the civilized world over. Its visitors' book contains the signatures of travellers even from China and Peru.

A time-honoured accompaniment to Simpson's Fish Ordinary is "Guessing the Cheese." After the soup, four excellent fish courses and one of flesh meat have been disposed of, the head waiter places upon a revolving pedestal of polished oak, which was made from a timber belonging to Nelson's flag-ship, the *Victory*, a fresh quarter of Cheddar in front of the President, who, having served out to the guests the portions with little tickets, invites them to exercise their computive skill. This threefold judgment, "by eye," of the height, girth, and weight of the cheese offers greater difficulties than a stranger would opine. One guess may be correct, but the like success regarding the other two rarely falls to the same person. Should the figures down to the fraction of an inch tally with the President's test by rule, tape and weighing scales, that fortunate visitor would win immortality in the annals of Simpson's. A brass plate on the aforesaid pedestal contains the names of all the lucky Simpsonians, together with the date of their proud achievement, since the first so recorded: Holloway, August 23, 1887. These are also inscribed on separate framed certificates behind the President's chair. Down to the moment of writing this page, the cheese has only been guessed nineteen times. It is worthy of especial mention that when, on July 19, 1912, a Mr. John Longley carried off the honours, he had made unsuccessful attempts to do so almost daily for seventeen years. His visual computations were: Height, 13 inches; girth, 27 inches; weight, 21 lb. A Mr. Harbrow ran him very close with 13½ inches, 26¼ inches, and 23 lb. The absence of fractions in the correct estimate struck all the company as remarkable. On April 19, 1901, the President himself guessed the cheese; but as showing how little his nearness to it proved helpful, he has not registered the like success since that date.

The celebration of such a pleasing event is always the same. "Cheese guessed!" exclaims the President, after an awesome pause. Instantly cheers and applause convey the rare happening to the remotest parts of the restaurant. In every other room, for the nonce, jubilation reigns. Waiters, cooks and cellarmen flit about in a frenzy of delight. "The magnums! the magnums!" chorus old Simpsonians, cognizant of the custom of the house, whenever the cheese *is* guessed, to serve champagne all round. "Order! order!" cries the President, in thundering tones. "Our policy," he continues, after silence betokens the respect due to him, "has always been liberal, never cheeseparing. Waiter, bring forward the champagne!" Needless to add, tremendous cheering greets this mandate and the appearance of the magnums. Mr. Henry Shelton has ruled over Simpson's Fish Ordinary for more than a generation and is universally popular. On June 25, 1914, after figuring as the guest of honour at a special banquet to mark his eightieth birthday, he became the recipient of a fat purse of gold as a token of personal esteem from Old Simpsonians who rallied around him.

OF BODILY REFRESHMENT

VI

OF BODILY REFRESHMENT

THE expeditious and marvellously cheap dissemination of news nowadays might lead one to reflect upon the sole means of keeping *au fait* with stirring events at home and abroad when the very few journals published were somewhat prohibitive in price. For more than a hundred and fifty years, down to the abolition of the Stamp and Paper Duties within the memory of some amongst us, the people generally had perforce to frequent a public place, where the news-sheet passed from hand to hand unless, as often happened, an obliging *habitué* read out its chief contents aloud to the company. Hence the great vogue of the Coffee Houses.

By paying a penny at the bar, anyone, however poorly clad, possessed the right of entry and staying as long as he pleased. Nor, as time wore on, was the refreshment commandable restricted to the innocent beverage called attention to by a coffee-pot over the outer door. On the contrary, the Coffee Houses were taverns in the best sense of the term—the daily resort of citizens for news and gossip and incidental business. Such advertisements as appeared in the news-sheets of those days always gave the address of a particular coffee-house where commercial and professional men met their clients, where auction sales "by inch of candle" took place, and matrimonial agencies flourished. At the coffee-house, too, lost articles might be handed in for the advertised reward, masters and prospective servants arranged their first interview, and gentlemen financially embarrassed were invited to negotiate a loan. But over and above all, the coffee-house was the newsmongers' lounge.

When the individual purchase of a daily newspaper came within the reach of the average citizen, the traditional rendezvous assumed the fresh character of a Chop House, and relied for custom upon purveying substantial fare rather than liquid refreshment. Except in the labyrinthine courts off Cornhill, the historic coffee and chop houses have by now utterly vanished from Central London, or been replaced by modern taverns under their original names. Sad to relate, Baker's, in Change Alley, came to an end of its glorious existence of not less than two and a half centuries during the summer of the year 1919. Yet stay! Without a trace of modernity, two such structures partaking of tavern characteristics still minister to the wants of the inner man in sight of St. Paul's. To "Ye Olde Watling Restaurant" reference has already been made in the opening section of this work. The other is Smith's, otherwise known as the White Hart, at the corner of Abchurch Lane and Cannon Street. Some idea of its antiquity may be gathered from the framed copy of a summons issued to the Common Councilmen of Candlewick Ward for the holding of an inquest there on Friday, December 31, 1751, which attracts notice in the grill-room. Both above and below stairs, Smith's conveys the impression of airy roominess. In addition to an efficient table service, the house transacts a brisk trade with snacks at the bars.

Assuredly the very last of the Old London Coffee Houses to maintain its popularity amongst a set clientele was Peele's, at the corner of Chancery Lane, Fleet Street. This is said to have come into the possession of the original Peele by purchase from a Widow Nixon in the year 1715. Exactly what Will's, Button's and Tom's were to the wits and beaux around Covent Garden was Peele's as the resort of journalists, writers and lawyers for upwards of a century. Its frequenters included Dr. Johnson, the Duke of Wellington, Charles Dickens, Lord Macaulay and Plain William Cobbett. Well into our own time, even after it had been transformed into a tavern-restaurant and guest-house, Peele's was renowned for its complete newspaper files, dating from the earliest issue of the *London Gazette* in 1759 and *The Times* in 1780, which could be consulted by anyone on payment of a small fee. The dispersal of this unique and valuable collection was greatly to be regretted. Another literary attraction of Peele's Coffee House was the portrait of Dr. Johnson painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds on the keystone of the mantelpiece of the large first-floor room in which the Paper Duties Repeal Committee held its meetings from 1858 to 1861. For many months after the Peace rejoicings, Peele's Hotel sheltered a considerable number of Anzacs who had borne their part in the overthrow of German militarism.

By common consent, based upon authentic records, the very first Coffee House to be established in London (*circa* 1652) was Thomas's, otherwise the George and Vulture, in George Yard, Lombard Street, or, as approached from Cornhill, in St. Michael's Alley; and the second the Rainbow, close to the Temple, in Fleet Street. Both these highly interesting resorts have happily been preserved to us. Since a description of the former belongs more properly to the section of this work headed "Dickens Haunts and Hostelries," we may at once pass to the Rainbow. When opened by James Farr, a barber, in the year 1657, the new rendezvous for the consumption of a strange beverage encountered some scathing criticism. Alive to their own business interests, of course, the Vintners' Company denounced coffee as "a sooty drink," which undermined virile power and insulted an Englishman's canary-drinking ancestry. Nor did satirists and lampooners let slip the opportunity of hitting off the man who sought to make robust citizens ape the Turks and so become effeminate. Farr was actually indicted by the churchwardens of St. Dunstan's parish for "making and selling a sort of liquor called coffee, whereby in making it he annoys his neighbours by evil smells and fires for the most part night and day, to the great danger and affrightment of his neighbours." Nevertheless, he stood his ground, and while becoming a person of some standing in the parish, he within a few years witnessed the multiplication of coffee-houses all over the City. After his death the Rainbow won considerable distinction as Nando's Coffee House, where eminent literary men resorted during the whole of the eighteenth century. This portion of the entire building was destined to become Groom's in the year 1818, and that down the narrow passage beside it a tavern, which has latterly been converted into a Bodega. The last named still preserves much of its old-time characteristics, while Groom's is as noted for aromatic coffee as Nando's was of yore.

Famous London Coffee Houses which, though literary or historic memories cling to them, now assert themselves to the public eye in a fresh guise need scarcely detain us here. Of such are the Chapter, Paternoster Row; the London, Ludgate Hill; the Grecian, in Devereaux Court, Strand; the George, at the entrance to the same court; and the Essex Head, Essex Street. Round the West End only two of the old-time London Coffee Houses now remain—Stone's, in Panton Street, Haymarket, and Snow's, in Sherwood Street, Piccadilly Circus. The complete story of Stone's and its surrounding night-life, which made the Haymarket a Street of Gay Adventure, would prove enchanting reading. Amid all this, from the year 1790, down through the Roaring Forties and the Fast Sixties, Stone's (like "Tom Cribb's Parlour" at the Union Arms near by) preserved its thorough respectability and was the only redeeming feature. As a tavern-restaurant of to-day it stands almost unrivalled. Snug and comfortable old-fashioned "boxes," steak and kidney pie and mashed potatoes washed down with old ale, toasted cheese to follow, and glorious punch reflect the style of public dining when the nineteenth century was young.

The Sceptre (see p. 101) afforded Londoners the sole surviving example of a fully licensed chop-house renowned for Old English fare and choice wines that displayed a facia sign instead of perpetuating the familiar name of its original host. In accepting this statement one cannot be unmindful of the Cheshire Cheese which was always a tavern and never a coffee-house. The only real affinity between the ancient Fleet Street snuggery and the coffee-houses of Old London might have been found in the employment behind the bar of a comely damsel whose function it was to draw liquors for the waiter, take in letters and dispatch messenger-boys *pro bono publico*. Contemporary allusions to the custom of paying one's respects to "Beauty at the Coffee House" are frequent. In this relation, also, we note that the barmaid is by no means a modern institution.

Nowadays we have to do with teashops instead of coffee-houses. Modern travel facilities, engendering the " gad-about habit," and the opening up of innumerable avenues to employment amongst women go a great way towards explaining the popularity of refreshment resorts which are such a feature in each leading thoroughfare. Other causes, too, merit notice. The commerical failure of the Coffee Taverns which preceded the teashops was wholly due to the lack of comfort and appetizing viands. An attractive window display always belied expectation when decently clad men found themselves confronted by the sanded floor, bare tables, thick mugs, pewter forks and spoons, great slabs of bread and butter, a meagre menu, indifferent cooking and slovenly attendants in their shirt-sleeves. At the best such places appealed only to the common orders of the people on the score of cheapness. Something far superior was needed ere others could be induced to forsake their old haunts.

That the multiplication of teashops with their comfortable surroundings and wholesome fare has given an immense fillip to sobriety among the middle classes cannot be denied. It has diverted a vast amount of luncheon-hour trade from licensed premises, and also brought about an appreciable reduction in the number of nominal Chop Houses and " Coffee and Dining Rooms " where drinks may be sent out for. No one now patronizes these but working men. Of the City luncheon-bars that formerly abounded only a couple are left to us. Vanished, too, have the ham-and-beef shops from many a side turning. Boiled beef and carrots was a standing dish for men of small means who improved the shining hour by taking a stroll round. Incidentally they treated themselves to a glass of beer at a favourite " house of call."

Thirty-five years ago clerks and shop assistants experienced a very real difficulty over obtaining a substantial meal without intoxicants. If unable to patronize the tavern Ordinary, like their betters, they had no alternative to the dingy coffee-shop, or the crowded milk and bun shop, but a public-house bar, either standing or perched upon a high stool. Much needless drinking consequently went forward. They met the same people, discussed the news and treated one another. The Brothers Gatti, as we know, inaugurated the café-restaurants, but these places were far too expensive for ordinary wage-earners, while as to lady intruders, had there been any, the waiters would have scorned to serve a simple afternoon-tea.

At that time the whole of the West End contained only one establishment where a lady could refresh herself with a cup of tea and something to eat. This was a quiet little pastry-cook's shop in Oxford Street, its parlour seating from twelve to fifteen persons. Two similar places in St. Paul's Churchyard made up the sum of the City's light-refreshment resorts until the Aerated Bread Company, by opening depôts for the sale of Dr. Dauglish's machine-made bread, became the pioneers of the teashop movement. To-day how different!

One potent factor in the popularity of the teashops is the universal adoption of the typewriter for mercantile and professional correspondence. Every business man now employs a typist—a stenographer, as our American cousins style her. Go where one will the clicking and grating of a machine fall upon the ear. And not merely in offices and counting-houses, but at many establishments which turn out manifold work for large firms and public companies a score of similar wage-earners present themself to view through plate-glass windows. Of the thousands who pour into the City by bus, tram, tube and train every morning, fully one-third are young women. Like the breadwinners of tradition, all these have to be fed at midday. It goes without saying that they constitute the chief support of the teashops.

Light-refreshment resorts round the West End, or even in Central London, on present-day lines would scarcely have proved a paying proposition thirty years ago. City men then resided within easy reach of the Bank. More for a change than aught else, their Womankind would come up now and again to St. Paul's Churchyard or Holborn on a shopping expedition, and be treated to lunch at a tavern of great repute. Usually they supported the local trading community. Suburbia was good enough for them. Tarn's, at the Elephant and Castle, attracted the majority of housewives from the outlying South London districts until the Brixton Bon Marché and similar emporiums at Peckham and Lewisham were called into existence. Displayed newspaper advertisements inset with "blocks" of the season's novelties at large millinery stores, ladies' periodicals and a "Woman's Page" in each illustrated weekly are the products of modern times. To see the shops, inspect what has been so gloriously belauded by the lady journalist and to secure bargains in the world's Fashion Mart were things then undreamt of. West End shopping was done quietly and systematically by carriage-folk, who needed no extraneous aids to selection.

Nowadays, every ambitious housewife likes to make a certain proportion of her purchases in the favoured quarter: suburban shopping satisfies her no more. The distances to be travelled being considerable, she naturally seeks rest and refreshment. Therefore the teashops thrive. The patronage accruing to such places from the theatre matinée and the afternoon concert must likewise be taken into account. And there is something else.

The servant problem has contributed materially to familiarize Londoners with the fashionable flat. When, during the early Eighties, Mr. G. R. Sims produced an adaptation of a French farce, *Flats*, at the Criterion Theatre, it achieved only a partial success, because independent domiciles on various-priced floors were then things new and strange. In our day the Continental style of living has become firmly established. All over the West End stately edifices so subdivided and with open courts have been set up. Round the suburbs, too, they are beginning to displace whole streets of mean dwellings. For comfort and convenience the typical separate house or semi-detached villa cannot compare with them. Instead of troubling themselves over rates and taxes, people who aspire to a first-class address pay an inclusive sum for a habitation in up-to-date "Mansions," which are as completely isolated from their immediate neighbours as if they rented the entire block. In such an abode, the acme of compactness, a single domestic, with the occasional help of a charwoman, can perform all the work of a suite of rooms. This may be regarded as the modern development of "Chambers in the Temple," whose occupants take their chief meals out. After breakfast, its mistress is rarely at home.

Female cooks will very soon find their occupation gone. The Society woman, the young wife self-educated up to the highest pitch of money-spinning and the bachelor girl find a new pleasure in public feeding amid luxurious surroundings. If possible, these belong to a Ladies' Club, see everything there is to be seen, by hook or by crook attend each function in the social calendar, dress in the height of fashion, and do not contemplate with dismay the registering of extra twopences on the taximeter. In the matter of tips they are as prodigal as the male species ; for so much depends on keeping up appearances. The prospect of even a hebdomadal evening at home cannot be endured. A nice little dinner with friends at a "smart" restaurant, followed by a visit to the play, constitutes their heaven of delight. When "out on their own," the invariable quest for afternoon-tea often leads them to the discovery of delightful snuggeries with odd designations or bizarre embellishments. To sum up : the complete emancipation of women, the advent of the bachelor girl, domestic irresponsibility born of living in flats, improved travel facilities and ever-increasing inducements for haunting the Marts of Fashion have brought about the abiding success of the Teashop Movement, which has probably reached its limitations where vocal and instrumental music add a zest to fashionable feeding. To expatiate on the varied attractions of the Blenheim Café, the Strand and the Coventry Street Corner Houses, and the Maison Lyons would be superfluous.

The conversion of an Old London Coffee House into a Lyons Teashop is interesting. Most elderly citizens will call to mind the large portrait in oils of Daniel Lambert, the heaviest man on record—his weight was 52 stone 11 lb.—which at one time did duty for a tavern sign towards the top of Ludgate Hill. What became of the painting no one seems to know. The name survives in Lambert House overhead, now used as offices with an entrance from Ave Maria Lane. The origin of the sign for mere trading purposes was, of course, similar to that of the "D.D. Cellars" in Bishopsgate. Neither the world's fattest man nor Dirty Dick ever had the remotest connection with a public-house. This prodigy of adipose tissue passed away at Stamford, Lincolnshire, on June 21, 1809. Exactly one hundred years later the Daniel Lambert assumed the fresh guise of a teashop.

The memorial tablets affixed by the Society of Arts and the London County Council to the residences of celebrities who have shuffled off this mortal coil are now very numerous. Perhaps none of them possesses such an all-round public interest as that which appears beside the entrance to a teashop at No. 87 Newgate Street. The inscription reads thus : " Sir Henry Irving served his time as a publisher's clerk on these premises, leaving in 1856." Here, at fourteen years of age, the future great actor, then known as John Henry Brodribb, spent four years of business drudgery whilst all the time his eyes were turned lovingly towards the stage. Two or three nights every week found him in the gallery of Sadler's Wells Theatre, where Samuel Phelps was presenting a fine Shakespearean repertoire. He also joined an elocution class and took part in amateur performances. During the last few months of his clerical career he placed himself under the tuition of a member of Phelps's stock company, from whom he received a letter of introduction to the manager of the newly built Lyceum Theatre, Sunderland. The rest of the story need not be told. It may, however, be noted that young Brodribb assumed his professional name through an abounding admiration for the genius of an American writer, Washington Irving. The description "publisher's clerk" on the Newgate Street teashop front is not strictly correct. His employers were East India merchants, and merely exporters of English books. After long years they became the pioneer publishers in our Indian Empire. To them—

Messrs. Thacker & Co.—Rudyard Kipling owed his entry into the world of Letters, *Soldiers Three* and other short stories of the like nature being reprints from an Allahabad newspaper.

Fond recollections of Lucas's cling to a depôt of the Express Dairy Company in Parliament Street, Westminster. By temperance advocates the conversion of this famous tavern several years ago into a prosaic milk and bun shop was no doubt hailed with infinite satisfaction. On the other hand, Londoners generally must have deplored the change. Old Westminster Boys, in particular, and many City men were wont to make "Lucas's" their haunt for capital dinners, choice wines and good fellowship. Here they could always rub shoulders with Members of Parliament, legal luminaries, architects and civil engineers who had residential chambers round about. "Lucas's" was, in short, the bright particular house of call for notabilities while the Royal Courts of Justice had their common approach through Westminster Hall. In Mid-Victorian days, as a mere bunshop, it enjoyed such patronage that the founder of the business seized the first opportunity of annexing the rear hostelry, the Queen's Head, in Cannon Row, and thenceforward the entire establishment bore the simple name of "Lucas's." In its cosy rooms barristers and solicitors held conferences after lunching together, Members of Parliament met their constituents, and eminent engineers discussed great public works. The Deposit Week for Bills in Parliament brought increased custom to the place; while during the protracted Tichborne Trial, when the Claimant himself often put in an appearance, witnesses for both sides and curious partisans in the celebrated case taxed its accommodation to the utmost. At that time "Lucas's" was more like a club than a tavern-restaurant. The midday saddle of mutton usually vanished after the first cuts. During certain months of the year a Tuesday *table d'hôte* dinner at six o'clock created an assemblage of members of the Institution of Civil Engineers ; and even the boys of Westminster School occasionally made short shrift of the luncheons set before them. Lucas had been dead some years when the Express Dairy Company caused the renowned tavern-restaurant to reassume its original character. The last owners of "Lucas's" were a well-known firm of brewers, but the transference of legal patronage to the vicinity of the Temple Bar Memorial played sad havoc with the fortunes of the house, notwithstanding that its fare was as good as before.

The voluntary surrender of the drink licence at "Lucas's" seems a pity. This happened also at the reconstructed Daniel Lambert on Ludgate Hill. Elsewhere it has been made the most of for the public benefit. Except through utter lawlessness or on the plea of redundancy under the operation of the Compensation Act, no public-house licence can be taken away. Messrs. Appenrodt's comestible shops in Oxford Street, Coventry Street and the Strand still purvey wines, spirits and malt liquors, because they are converted taverns, respectively the Dolphin, the Royal Standard and the Adelphi Stores. So does a high-class fish restaurant adjoining the Vaudeville Theatre, the old grillroom of the Queen's Head being a buffet with refreshment tables ranged along its right-hand wall.

The like observation applies to Palaces of Pleasure. It may not be within the knowledge of every Londoner that legitimate playhouses, and the successors of certain old-time amusement resorts invested with the Lord Chamberlain's dramatic licence, as well as those music-halls occupying tavern sites, enjoy the drink privilege ; whereas modern Variety Theatres which have displaced ordinary house property but not encroached upon licensed premises bid fair to be for ever bereft of a drinking-bar. This explains the seeming anomaly of intoxicants being commandable at the St. George's Hall—once a theatre in all but name, attracting narrow-minded folk to witness Mr. and Mrs. German Reed's namby-pamby playlets—and the Palladium, which, as Hengler's Circus, was licensed for the performance of equestrian dramas. Even the magnificent London Opera House, when it 'verted to Spectacular Revue and, as now, Pictures, had to be conducted on teashop lines, because the London County Council pledged itself to maintain the "dryness" of Kingsway. Only after encountering stout opposition from the cranks and bigots has Sir Oswald Stoll obtained the partial concession to serve wines and beers *with food* in his new restaurant annexe. In brief, among the whole number of palatial variety theatres which have latterly come into existence, the Chiswick Empire is perhaps the sole one provided with refreshment-bars, since its erection involved the removal of a public-house.

The Palm Court of the Palladium demands a few words. Here, amid delightful music, upwards of one thousand persons may be comfortably seated over light refreshment. So far from the solidarity of this sumptuous underground palace being superficial, nothing but Norwegian rose granite enters into its construction. Yet another feast to the eye is the Louis XV Salon, decorated in the Watteau style. These *recherché* lounges admirably serve as waiting-halls for the three daily shows ; but that they are open to the general public without the necessity of paying for admission to the auditorium may be an item of news.

Comparatively few Londoners could testify to the existence of a Roof Garden Restaurant. Selfridge's mammoth emporium in Oxford Street can possibly boast of the finest example on English soil. The magnificent prospect to be commanded from its terrace tea-garden over the cold-luncheon hall, and the spacious Palm Court with tables set out at an altitude of more than a hundred feet, embraces Hampstead Heath, Hammersmith Bridge, the Crystal Palace and Bow Common. A similar scene of enchantment presents itself from the prettily laid out gardens on the roof of Whiteley's, in Queen's Road, Bayswater, where also facilities for obtaining liquid and solid refreshment are provided. The Terrace Restaurant at the Piccadilly Hotel is not the only one of its kind in London. Another will be found in connection with Arthur's Stores, at the corner of Richmond Road and Westbourne Grove. Not only is the serving of luncheons and afternoon-teas over the row of shops by brisk waiters here an institution, but dinners and suppers are in great request, powerful arc lamps shedding their lustre on the tide of human life in the street below. A passing reference may also be made in this place to a virtual roof café at the Bayswater Cinematograph Theatre, opposite Whiteley's new premises. By a carpeted stairway from Queen's Road, the general public gain direct access to it, and, "rain or shine," beneath a canvas awning, the outlook is very pleasing.

Tea in a Windmill commends itself to pleasure-seekers who like a "spread" on the grass without the inconvenience of carrying a spirit kettle. An *alfresco* luncheon may be enjoyed anywhere : not so tea. The Old Windmill on Wimbledon Common has for many years made a capital tea-house for picnic parties in the vicinity. Its sails constitute a sky-sign discernible afar off. Few people are aware that the flag-staff near by is the second tallest in Great Britain. The gift of a Canadian Corps in acknowledgment of hospitality meted out to it during a visit to the Camp before military manœuvres were transferred to Bisley, this specimen of a single Californian pine was towed across the Atlantic by a great ocean liner. Wimbledon Common now forms the headquarters of the London and Scottish Golf and the All-England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Clubs, whose members help to swell the receipts of the Windmill Tea House.

What was down to a few years ago known as "Teapot Row," leading from Trafalgar Road to the western gates of Greenwich Park, attracts but little custom to-day. Its business has been almost entirely diverted to the Ranger's Lodge at the Blackheath entrance, which serves the twofold purpose of a popular tea-house and a meeting-place for local clubs. This fine old mansion recalls the time when the position of Ranger of a Royal Park was the sinecure of exalted personages. Passing over its previous occupants, the best remembered name will be that of the Duke of Connaught, who, whilst pursuing his studies at the Military Academy, Woolwich, made the model of a fort which attracts notice in the grounds, now thrown into the Park. Out of all the pleasure-seekers who take tea at the Lodge, very few have the least inkling of these associations.

While in the neighbourhood of the Royal Observatory, Londoners on a holiday jaunt should not fail to make or renew an acquaintance with two celebrated taverns fronting the river at the eastern and western extremities of Greenwich Hospital. Both the Trafalgar and the Ship will be ever memorable on account of their Ministerial Whitebait Dinners and fashionable outings thereto. Down to the Gladstone Administration of 1868, the Tories met at the first named and the Liberals at the other. For many years afterwards the Old Nobility, emulating the customs of their forbears, drove down to Greenwich during the season for the salubrious air of the Park and the Royal Hospital Grounds, and, especially, the whitebait dinners served at both establishments. These pleasant road-jaunts by coach or "drag" had their counterpart in the steamboat excursions which brought together a host of humbler folk to the landing-stages just outside.

Unfortunately, it was then no longer possible to visit with welcome gifts of tobacco the veteran Jack Tars in their own spruce domiciles beneath the roof of William and Mary's magnificent foundation, because, by a mistaken edict of October 1, 1869, the whole nine hundred of them were pensioned off to end their days elsewhere. This in itself spelt ruin for the town as a trading centre. The subsequent laying down of tramlines along the entire route from Westminster Bridge and the stoppage of the regular steamboat service put the *coup de grâce* upon the commercial decadence of Greenwich. Nowadays the fine Painted Hall, with sundry Nelson relics, and the Chapel of the Royal Hospital constitute the sole attraction, and whitebait dinners have become merged into local history. As a result, both the Trafalgar and the Ship have suffered immeasurably from the changed fashion of the times. A nice little dinner a few miles out of town, after an exhilarating ride in a horse-drawn vehicle, was the most highly prized diversion of courtly dames with a male escort during the Victorian Era. The sterner sex had their night-haunts where the utmost licence prevailed ; but, irrespective of the Opera and the *Bal masqué* on occasion, woman's life could only be described as monotonous in the extreme. For years upon years the Crystal Palace Concerts owed their success and prestige to adequate feeding arrangements on the spot. Another fashionable goal for prandial enjoyment was the Star and Garter at Richmond, where, by the way, Billett's little green-fronted "Original Shop for Maids of Honour," established two hundred years ago, still attracts goodly custom. Down the river, as we have seen, the Whitebait Dinners and a visit to the Greenwich Pensioners were keenly appreciated by Victorian ladies. Such "swagger" restaurants as had at that time been set up in the West End appealed only to men and women of "the Smart Set," who were very much in the minority.

More than a dozen years back, a fresh licensee, Mr. Alfred Crisp, made a praiseworthy attempt to revive Whitebait Dinners at the Ship, Greenwich, but their success was short-lived. The utter inadequacy of the London County Council's steamboat services, as contrasted with those of the old Thames Conservancy Board, proved inimical to enterprise. Though shorn of its original proportions through the building of Admiralty maisonettes at the rear, the once famous riparian guest-house still has the great first-floor dining-room preserved intact. Belowstairs, where the aspect is that of a superior tavern-restaurant, no inconsiderable custom accrues from the foot-passengers who make use of the river-bed tube communicating with the Isle of Dogs.

The public Whitebait Dinners at the Trafalgar declined long before those at the Ship. Of the two taverns, the Trafalgar is perhaps the more interesting. When built on the site of the old George in the year 1830, it had each of its public rooms dedicated by name over the doorway to a great naval commander. That in honour of Admiral Lord Nelson much resembled the stately stern-quarters of his own flag-ship, the *Victory*, being fitted with sloping walls and port-holes, and, by way of "local colour," a lantern, capstan and emblematically carved balustrade. Nor were the other apartments less noteworthy. These things must be reckoned with the departed glories of the place itself, since they came under the auctioneer's hammer nearly thirty years ago. After a somewhat chequered existence, due, as we have seen, to the entire falling-off of steamboat patronage, the Trafalgar became a war-time hostel for Seamen's Nurses, albeit its tavern licence was not allowed to lapse.

A couple of miles south-east of Greenwich lies the manor of Eltham (the Old Home), where, beside the moat and the bridge which spans it, may be seen the ivy-clad Banqueting Hall of one of England's most magnificent Royal palaces. Nothing of an antiquarian interest can excel this relic of kingly grandeur. The symbol of the rose plentifully displayed thereon attests its erection, as part of four great quadrangles, by Edward IV, who kept Christmas here in the year 1482. After him nearly every English monarch down to Elizabeth presided over the Yuletide festivities within these same walls. Here Henry VII gave entertainments on a lavish scale, and the much-wedded Henry VIII signalized the Christmas of 1515 with a tournament recalling the Days of Chivalry. After the execution of Charles I, Eltham Palace fell into the hands of the Parliament, who had a report drawn up as to its extent and condition. When, thereupon, the Crown property found a private purchaser, the "fair chapel" and many suites of apartments were razed to the ground; while the great Banqueting Hall, though permitted to remain, was put to the plebeian uses of a barn. Not until our own time, which witnessed its renovation through the instrumentality of the late Colonel North, "the Nitrate King," did the grand old fabric make a just claim to public reverence. As now seen, it conveys an idea of what must have been the architectural beauty of the Palace itself. The only other perfect example of its hammer-beam roof, combining lightness and strength, which characterized all Royal and baronial halls of centuries gone by, is that of Westminster Hall. Judging from the immense length of the beams, sound and straight throughout, modern antiquaries are of opinion that only a richly wooded district could have yielded such choice supplies of timber, while examination proves it to have been handled with amazing labour and admirable skill. Now that the venerable remains of Eltham Palace, easily accessible from all parts of London, are thrown open for public inspection, they should certainly not be left unvisited. In itself the old town is interesting to wander through, and by no means devoid of conveniences for obtaining "Afternoon Tea."

After so much said in the present section of this work about coffee and tea drinking, a brief reference to Twining's great London Tea House, now facing the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, will be perfectly admissible. The circumstance that the original Thomas Twining, whose portrait was painted by Hogarth, set up the sign of the Golden Lion outside the slightly transformed Tom's Coffee House, the favourite haunt of Pope, Akenside and other literary lights, along the left-hand side of Devereaux Court, for the sale and consumption of "the new China herb," early in the year 1710, forms an interesting link with the social customs of the Restoration period. Although tea (or rather *tay*) at that time, and for a great many years afterwards, cost nearly thirty shillings a pound, and small china cups of the delicious concoction on the spot one shilling each, Twining's tea-house from the first prospered exceedingly. Throughout the greater part of two centuries, aristocratic ladies on a banking expedition to the City always paid a visit to the far-famed emporium at the sign of the Golden Lion in the Strand. Of eminent and illustrious customers the lineal descendants of Thomas Twining could produce a truly voluminous list. These, however, fade into insignificance beside the Royal Warrants held by the pioneer tea-house of London from each individual sovereign of these realms since the reign of Queen Anne—in addition to the Kings of Italy and Spain, several exalted personages of the House of Brunswick and the ex-Kaiser of Germany. To only a select few of such Royal appointments the brilliantly coloured coats-of-arms over the entrance to Twining's bear testimony.

Coming back to the tea-houses of our own time, there can be no doubt that picturesqueness is a great factor in the popularity of any refreshment rendezvous. Luxurious appointments may make a powerful appeal to some tastes, but, as the long membership roll of the new Carlyle Club, towards the Circus end of Piccadilly, with its barbaric surroundings suggestive of buccaneer spoil in the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth, proves, and the ever-increasing clientele of "Les Gobelins" restaurant of the New Gallery Kinema in Regent Street—a dignified Baronial Hall with oak panellings and tapestries, an orchestra platform and a perfect semblance of a red-tile Tudor floor—bears witness to, the antiquated style of adornment finds a wider appreciation. True to its title, the Old Oak Tea House, at the corner of Oxford and New Bond Streets, commands liberal patronage on account of its mock Jacobean character. In the managerial sanctum is an ancient treasure-chest which had been recovered from a Spanish galleon sunk in the Armada sea-fight. A pre-War establishment in Regent Street, opposite the Piccadilly Hotel, was "Ye Olde Bath Tea Rooms," specializing Bath polonies, with a man in the costume of Beau Nash at the door. The Cottage Tea Rooms in various parts of the City and the West End, featuring ingle-nooks and other details of a country-side habitation, are perfectly charming retreats from the bustle of modern life. Finally, two select little restaurants in the favoured quarter would yield a pleasant surprise to the casual visitor. The basement of "Au Petit Riche," Old Compton Street, Soho, has been completely fitted up after the style of a Breton home, and what bears the name of "The Dutch Oven," Baker Street, like an ordinary living-room in the Low Countries.

Odd-sounding designations in themselves frequently attract custom to an up-to-date tea-house. Among such are the Cup and Saucer Inn, Euston Road ; the Tea Cup Inn, Portugal Street, off Kingsway ; the Tea Kettle Inn, Rupert Street, and "The Good Humoured Ladies," in Coulson Street, Draycott Avenue, Chelsea. Much more to the point, perhaps, as indicated by a pictorial sign over the entrance, is The Wayside Inn, in Bishop's Court, Chancery Lane.

Londoners in quest of things new and strange may be confidently recommended to visit the Hôtel et Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel, in Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, where, on the first floor, they will find themselves in a Futurist Dining Room. The handiwork of Mr. Wyndham Lewis, to whom it was a labour of love whilst on leave from active service during the War, this novel scheme of decoration takes one completely out of the times in which we live. Here quite famous personages associated with the Three Arts lunch and dine. Naturally, imaginative folk of lesser renown, cultivating Vorticist tastes, may do the same. Latter-day appreciation of this riot of colour and design has caused the adjoining lobby to be entrusted to Mr. William Roberts, the painter of a remarkable picture in the War Memorial Exhibition at the Royal Academy, for embellishment on similarly original lines. Surveying his present examples on the walls, one is left in doubt as to whether the figures are clothed or not. Sheer imagination is also brought into play to determine their age and sex, and the meaning sought to be conveyed by the pictures. The proprietor betrays a great admiration for the work of these two artists, and little by little he intends to hand over the decoration of other rooms to their fancy. Belowstairs, of course, the aspect will always be normal, as befitting a high-class feeding resort patronized by the most fastidious diners. Prior to the War the Hôtel et Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel was the acknowledged London home of the Freak Banquet, where many joyous functions, organized by men and women of artistic proclivities from the neighbouring Studio Club, were kept up until daybreak.

Like the New Gallery Kinema and "Les Gobelins" restaurant in Regent Street, Verrey's is leased direct from the Crown. For upwards of a hundred years this has stood at the corner of Hanover Street in the selfsame style as we now behold it. Never in its long history have Londoners noted the slightest deviation from the familiar blue colour-scheme which gave it a distinctive character. Established in a small way by a Franco-Swiss refugee named Verrey, it soon gained high favour on account of his beautiful daughter, who assisted him in the management. Nor was it she alone that lent a seductiveness to the Regent Street "Blue House." From the first excellent repasts fit for epicures were served. To say "I have just dined at Verrey's" was tantamount to boasting of inclusion among "the Smart Set." In pre-War days evening dress and "dreams" of gowns constituted the passports to Verrey's at dinner-time. Such extraneous attractions as an orchestra or a "crack" pianist would have been stoutly resented. Like so many other fashionable restaurants, Verrey's endures the loss of hundreds of its former *habitués* who never returned from the battlefields of France and Flanders; but the Regent Street "Knuts" still in the land of the living continue to swear by and foregather at the old place.

Round the West End there are joyous feeding palaces for the *élite* of the dramatic and musical professions concerning which play and concert-going enthusiasts possess no knowledge. Perhaps the most "swagger" of them all is Pagani's, in Great Portland Street. Ever since the late Mario Pagani set up this *recherché* restaurant in the year 1871, it has merited the patronage of illustrious devotees of the twain Arts. Noting the preference of such a clientele for out-of-the-way tables, he conceived the idea of providing a snuggery where they could entirely escape the observation of strangers. By an autograph-hunter a privileged survey of the "Artistes' Room" on the second floor overlooking the street would not soon be forgotten. Beneath portraits and engravings, its four walls, divided into panels, each protected by a hinged glass frame, display the handiwork of little coteries that have lunched, dined and supped therein. A more exhaustive collection of signatures, in many cases accompanied by scraps of music or facetious drawings, cannot be met with all the world over. So crowded together are these that a careful scrutiny occupies much time. Americans "doing" London would rejoice to be afforded a sight of these almost speaking evidences of right royal repasts in privacy, the more so since the guide-books utterly ignore them; but, unless by favour of the ever-courteous Signor Arturo Meshini, whose mother has inherited the property, the "Artistes' Room" is strictly reserved for the visitations of men and women great in the world's eyes. As for anyone else sitting down to a meal in this *sanctum sanctorum*, the possibility is somewhat remote.

Autographs, staves of music and quaint drawings preserved in a singularly attractive album are the cherished treasure of the proprietors of the Pall Mall Restaurant, next door to the Haymarket Theatre, which has been the resort of the "Higher Bohemianism" cult for many years past. This site is perhaps the most historically interesting in the West End of London. Here, shortly after the demolition of an ancient inn, the King's Arms, in the year 1711, arose the Little Theatre, on the boards of which Lavinia Fenton (the future Duchess of Bolton), Fanny Abington and Elizabeth Farren (Countess of Derby) made their respective *debuts*; where its musical director, Dr. Arne, introduced "Rule, Britannia!" as a national anthem; where the youthful Mozart was first heard to play upon the harpsichord in England; where Samuel Foote and the two Colmans took up the reins of management; where the "Bottle Conjuror's Hoax" was perpetrated and the Riot of the Tailors took place; and where the World of Fashion laughed itself into convulsions over the acting of "Romeo" Coates. The Little Theatre enjoyed the rare distinction of having existed for more than a century without the occurrence of a fire. October 14, 1820, witnessed its final closing, and on the following 4th of July the present Haymarket Theatre, built next to it, was functionally inaugurated. Since 1840 the site of the earlier playhouse has been consecrated to good feeding, first as the Café de l'Europe, and, in our own day, as the Pall Mall Restaurant.

The Cavour Restaurant, on the east side of Leicester Square, close to the Alhambra, is a favourite luncheon haunt of many managers, dramatic authors and eminent artistes of the variety theatre stage. Well-known faces may be seen here any day. At eventide its special full-course dinner caters essentially for those in pursuit of pleasure.

The ground upon which the late Oscar Phillippe built this luxurious dining-hall, at the rear of the combined Cavour Restaurant and dwelling-house fronting the Square, harboured, during the gay Sixties of the last century, a notorious skulking-den which would have disgraced the vilest quarters of the French capital. Kept by a man named Brookes, who had been "Baron" Nicholson's protean witness at the Garrick's Head Tavern, the Coal Hole and the Cyder Cellars, it was by turns a "Judge and Jury" show, a *Poses plastiques* exhibition, a dancing saloon, and a "gaff" of the lowest order. Beyond the control of any licensing authority, its midnight orgies defied the police, until Mr. Phillippe, whose own slumbers were greatly disturbed by them, bought up the whole property, extending to Bear Street and the then Castle Street, now Charing Cross Road. Two existing taverns, the Bear and the King's Head, are embraced in the freehold, while between them, where the Cinema de Paris stands, was, hidden from public view by a great advertisement hoarding, the pretty garden which he loved to tend and contemplate. The oft-mooted acquisition of the

Charing Cross Road frontage for a palatial new theatre would seemingly involve the effacement of the Cavour Restaurant.

Simpson's-in-the-Strand is another well beloved resort of the leading lights in the dramatic and variety professions. In the old days, when its " Grand Divan " featured a cup of fragrant coffee and a good cigar for a shilling, this admirably met the needs of clubless men. The Divan was also the headquarters of the Chess World. Prominent " Knights of the Round Table " were such theatrical celebrities as Charles Mathews, John Baldwin Buckstone, Benjamin Webster, Edward Askew Sothern, Laman Blanchard, Douglas Jerrold, Pierce Egan, Mark Lemon, J. L. Toole, Carl Rosa, John Hollingshead and (Sir) Augustus Harris. The huge circle of mahogany was actually built into the new Simpson's, because it could not have been got through any doorway or window.

Simpson's has ever acted up to its traditions. As the pioneer of all modern restaurants, it antedated the Royal Adelaide Gallery by untold years. Nowhere else in London are the hot joints wheeled up to the tables for diners to choose a favourite cut from. A peculiar distinctiveness also characterizes the garb of the waiters, which eschews alike the swallow-tail coat and the short jacket and apron. The annual roasting of huge joints at open fires with revolving spits exceeds ten thousand. Simpson's Old English Fare to-day makes the same appeal to robust diners as it did in the year 1716, when Lord Kenmuir and the Earl of Derwentwater, whilst awaiting their trial on a charge of high treason in Westminster Hall, obtained permission, by special favour of the Constable of the Tower, to dine at the famous tavern and eating-house. These political opponents of Sir Robert Walpole, who, as leading members of the Jacobite Club established within its walls, had joined in the Rebellion of the previous year, set the food service at the Fountain Tavern, which in Early Victorian days became Reis's Divan and later Simpson's, at a high value. For exceptionally good port Simpson's-in-the-Strand has always been justly renowned. As regards chaste decorations, the new building might give points to many a fashionable hotel-restaurant. A special room for a party of theatrical "stars" is only one of the elegant supplementary apartments to the large dining-halls.

In the matter of food surprises, London is the most cosmopolitan city in the world. Round the West End, as roughly defined by the Soho district, quiet little restaurants and cafés of all nationalities may be met with. These embrace Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Greek, Spanish, Swiss, French, Russian, Serbian and Belgian representatives. There was formerly a Cairo Café in the connecting thoroughfare between Oxford Street and Soho Square. Strange to say, the Turk has all along kept aloof from the catering trade in London, though as a street carpet-seller he was down to the outbreak of the War a familiar figure. Among other alluring features of an Armenian café in Archer Street, just behind the Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, are Russian tea, flavoured with lemon, served in glasses, coffee made in the Egyptian style, and facilities for smoking a real Narghile.

By way of drawing to a close, a double-fronted shop towards the Palace Theatre end of Greek Street, Soho, calls for particular notice. Despite its description "Restaurant au Bienvenu," one would scarcely regard this as a feeding rendezvous of an ordinary kind. Neither is it. A good luncheon or dinner in the French style ("Tripe de Caen" *par excellence*), may indeed be had here at a marvellously cheap rate ; but the great speciality of the establishment is snails. Both windows convey the intelligence in French, " Snails to take away." On dishes, genuine Burgundy *escargots*, ready parsleyed and buttered for home consumption, subject only to heating afresh, are laid out, while small tubs contain others in their natural state. M. Georges Gaudin, whose counterfeit presentment astride a giant specimen appears over the shop-front, is the sole importer of these delicacies. He serves them piping hot on the spot, and supplies not a few hotel-restaurants where they are in demand. It may occasion surprise to learn that between eight and nine thousand *escargots* are eaten in London every month during the season, which lasts from October to April, inclusive. The denizens of the foreign colony round about betray a great liking for them, as they do also for frogs (*grenouilles*). These likewise enter into the menu at the Restaurant au Bienvenu, where the thighs—the only edible part of the frog—can be purchased for home cooking by the dozen on a skewer.

Like the *charcuterie* purveyors of Paris, M. Gaudin receives his *escargots* alive. In the basement of No. 26 Greek Street he has a specially concreted floor on which they hibernate. As every *gourmet* must be aware, their preparation for the table entails much trouble. To enlarge upon this theme would be impossible here. The nutritive qualities of genuine Burgundian *escargots* cannot be gainsaid. They are also easily digestible. The extreme repulsiveness of a whole snail, with its horns, at the end of a two-pronged fork has yet to be conquered by Englishmen generally, but a visit to the Restaurant au Bienvenu would convince anyone that no such consideration sways the minds of our volatile trans-Channel neighbours.

M. Gaudin serves up his *escargots* so hot that a paper envelope to drop each in as it is lifted out of the hollow of an enamel disc which fits into an ordinary plate becomes necessary. In themselves, a dozen snails washed down with Burgundy constitute a satisfying meal, and by no means an expensive one.

HISTORIC LANDMARKS

VII

HISTORIC LANDMARKS

IF one conspicuous London Landmark more than any other can lay claim to historic associations, it is the Bricklayers' Arms at the junction of Tower Bridge and Old Kent Roads, S.E. Some inns and taverns are justly entitled to veneration on account of having been the ordinary "house of call," or mayhap the erstwhile habitation, of a single mortal great in the world's eyes; but the stately edifice with which we are now dealing perpetuates the memory of quite a number of illustrious personages who played an important part on the stage of human life. Especially does the Bricklayers' Arms reflect the glory of England's dominion over the seas. It is no exaggeration to state that all our naval worthies in the days of the wooden battleships found their warmest welcome at this ancient hostelry when on land.

Traversing the centuries, one may in spirit encounter a brilliant array of Commanders who made the Bricklayers' Arms their temporary home. Here Sir Francis Drake put up for a while after his return to Motherland flushed with victories gained over Van Tromp. Under its hospitable roof Admiral Duncan wrote those dispatches announcing the tide of events which actuated a grateful Sovereign to bestow upon him the title of Lord Camperdown.

Sir Cloudesley Shovel was a regular guest at the Bricklayers' Arms during those short periods that he allowed himself to remain on *terra firma*. Lord Hood rested here after defeating the French Fleet on June 1, 1740, and again, crowned with fresh naval honours, in the following year. Last, not least noteworthy among the records of the Bricklayers' Arms, is the fact that Vice-Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson, on landing in England after the victorious Battle of the Nile, posted to London from Sheerness along the Kentish highway to receive the thanks of the King and Court, and made his last halting-place here before he finally drew up at the Ship, Charing Cross, which is now a restaurant bearing the same name.

In other respects, too, the Bricklayers' Arms can boast of honoured traditions. Long before the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth it was the recognized guest-house for all travellers to London from the south-eastern counties. The original wayside inn, which the modern one displaced in 1881, rose upon this site about the year 1340, *temp.* Edward II. In the course of the succeeding reign an old chronicler, Philip de Comines, tells that the Burgundian Knights who came over to these shores after the Battle of Crécy to challenge the English lords at a grand Smoothfield (the modern Smithfield) Tournament were lodged "in a vast hostel on the old rode from Kent into Southwarke, about two-thirds of a league from the bridge across the Thames." This distance fixes the location of the Bricklayers' Arms to a nicety. The same historian speaks of the generous entertainment provided for his guests by the host of the inn, and their rejoicings after the contest, in which the chivalry of England "were mightilie overthrown." In the next century (Edward IV), Warwick the King Maker stayed at the Bricklayers' Arms whilst awaiting a retinue with horses before going abroad to plead the suit of his monarch with the sister of the French King. The mission proved successful, but meantime Edward had married Elizabeth Woodville, in consequence of which there arose a deadly feud between Warwick and his sovereign lord. It is also on record that Anne of Cleves waited at the Bricklayers' Arms while her portrait was sent in advance to Henry VIII, and from here she afterwards proceeded to be made Queen at the English Court.

The importance of the Bricklayers' Arms as a coaching inn from the earliest times led to the adoption of the same name for the first South London railway station—now a great goods depôt—close by. Few people are aware that this really came to be built in anticipation of the memorable visit of Prince Albert to Queen Victoria, which resulted in a singularly happy union. Here also Napoleon III and the late Empress Eugénie alighted from the train on the occasion of their State visit to London during the Crimean War; and long afterwards the Bricklayers' Arms Station was reserved for the reception of distinguished trans-Channel "strangers within our gates."

Reverting to the famous hostelry at the crossways, the year 1881 witnessed the demolition of the original for the building of the present one. At a depth of fifteen feet the excavators discovered the bones, antlers, horns and molars of animals, both herbivorous and carnivorous; while the finding of coins and ornaments of precious metal gave more than a colouring of truth to the story of the Burgundian Knights. It is worthy of note that the ancient foundations were five feet three inches (or seven bricks' length) in thickness, and that the undecayed mortar afforded a substantial proof of the thoroughness with which the builders of old performed their work.

In the year 1905 the Bricklayers' Arms underwent entire reconstruction to bring it into line with modern utility. Though the shell of the fabric was left untouched, we now behold a practically new hostel. A tiled view of the original at the Tower Bridge Road entrance to the saloon should make a special appeal to antiquaries, whether they betray Rechabite proclivities or the reverse. Inside are framed specimens of the waybills used when the Bricklayers' Arms was the halting-place for all coaches journeying between London and Dover. Nor do these exhaust the attractions of the historic "house of call." Its mural embellishments embrace eleven large oil paintings of scenes from Shakespeare's plays and beauty spots in foreign lands, the handiwork of Mr. W. Stone. True to its traditions, the Bricklayers' Arms enjoys a high repute for the excellence of its cuisine. As a matter of fact, no other hot luncheon resort with agreeable surroundings exists in the district.

The importance of the Elephant and Castle Inn long anterior to the stage-coaching era may be gauged from a reference thereto by Shakespeare. In *Twelfth Night*, Act III, Scene 2, Antonio says to Sebastian:

> In the south suburbs, at the Elephant,
> Is best to lodge: I will bespeak our diet,
> Whiles you beguile the time and feed your knowledge
> With viewing of the town.

The Bard's acquaintance with the great Transpontine landmark finds its explanation in the existence of a playhouse at Newington Butts, near at hand. Other authentic records of the Elephant and Castle, which derived its sign from the arms of the Cutlers' Company, are traceable back to the middle of the seventeenth century. As a coaching inn this was the first halting-place from the La Belle Sauvage and the Swan with Two Necks, in the City, for picking up travellers to distant parts of Surrey and Sussex, of equal renown with the Angel and the Peacock at Islington, on the Great North Road.

Concerning the two last-named inns, nothing of special import can be said. The present Angel is the fourth built on the site, and, as of yore, is still famed for its food fare : but the Peacock, a few doors down the Upper Street, though a much older structure, seems to have lost all touch with the associations of travel, in that its business consists solely in vending alcoholic refreshments.

Perhaps the oldest licensed house in the City of London is that which, *sans* sign or facia board, stands at the corner of Bishopsgate and Liverpool Streets. Not one Londoner out of a thousand who hurries by it to the great railway stations or samples the liquors on tap inside could say off-hand what the title of the historic hostelry might be. Since the coming to it of Messrs. G. Whitehead and Sons, window bills have set forth their address as "121 late 199 Bishopsgate." The adjoining yard, however, bears a name which leaves no doubt that the tavern is a modern successor of the White Hart Inn, which, extending southwards to St. Botolph's Church, was the scene of many an Elizabethan play performed in the selfsame yard. Situate opposite the Bishops' Gate, this had for centuries been a hostel for travellers and carriers who arrived in London when that portal was closed, or for other reasons desired to pass the night outside the City. Messrs. Whitehead's wine and spirit list is embellished with an ancient view of the White Hart and the church, *temp.* 1420. The present house dates from the year 1829. Nevertheless, tradition asserts that a still earlier White Hart stood beside the gateway of Bethlehem Priory on the site of the parish church, and was thought to have been a hostel for pilgrims connected with the monastic foundation. Of all London's inns, hardly any can trace their history so far back as this.

Another nameless "house of call" within easy reach of the City's heart announces itself to passers-by as simply "119 Fenchurch Street." Before it was converted into a wine-house of mock antique aspect, this bore the sign of the Elephant. Only the ground-floor portion has undergone alteration since it replaced the original in the year 1826. The former was a massive stone pile which had the good fortune to resist the Great Fire of London. When the flames left a waste of ruins all around, the Elephant afforded a refuge for many homeless citizens. Here the picture-satirist, William Hogarth, who first saw the light in Bartholomew Close, November 10, 1697, took up his abode during a period of direst poverty. Having served an apprenticeship to Ellis Gamble in Cranbourne Street, Leicester Fields, he sought to earn a livelihood by disposing of copper-plates to the booksellers. Such small success attended his efforts for a number of years that, like George Morland and other artists of future renown, he was glad to paint tavern signs, of which an interesting example, now lost, gave its name to "The Man Loaded with Mischief," where Mooney's Irish House, opposite Hanway Street, stands to-day.

At the Elephant Tavern, in return for board and lodging, Hogarth embellished the tap-room with a series of large paintings on the walls that brought much custom to the house. The most notable of these was his first sketch for a picture, afterwards engraved and published under the title of "Midnight Conversations." This, however, differed in many essentials from the work as we now know it. Men came long distances to gloat over the painting, which certainly overstepped the bounds of decency. Facing it were a Harlequin and a Pierrot laughing heartily at the vulgar representation. A third picture had for its subject "Barton Bush Fair," and a fourth "The Porters of the Hudson Bay Company," whose living prototypes may have frequented the tavern, since the Company's warehouse was close by. These incentives to tap-room conversation were the product of Hogarth's genius between the years 1724 and 1729. On March 23, 1729, he married secretly at Paddington Church the only daughter of Sir James Thornhill, and from that time Fortune treated him better. Little did the *habitués* of the Elephant foresee the development of the obscure artist into a great moral teacher. With the demolition of the tavern to make way for the one now in evidence, Hogarth's early work was irrevocably lost to the world.

For a whole-hearted suggestion of the genuinely antique, no inn or tavern all London round can compare with the Six Bells in King's Road, Chelsea, the structural model for which, when the original gave place to the present one in the year 1898, was taken from the City of Chester. Within and without the aspect is delightfully old-worldish. Half a dozen electric lights with china bell shades, ranged close together at right angles to the fabric over the chief entrance, serve as an appropriate sign. The walls and ceilings throughout are of solid oak. Cosy ingle-nooks, high-back chairs, oil paintings and tapestries abound.

Everything about the place transports one's mind to days of yore. Even the electric light fittings consist of lanthorns and wrought-iron brackets. A bowling-green at the rear of the historic wayside inn differs in no respect from its appearance in the reign of Charles I. At the Six Bells, naturally, all the artists from the studios round about regularly foregather. The spacious dining-saloon overhead forms the headquarters of the Chelsea Cycling Club. Adjoining it, amid most comfortable surroundings, is the evening rendezvous of the Chelsea Bowling Club. In this room the old arm-chairs of the original inn are preserved. To such Londoners as cultivate a taste for the archaic combined with true comfort, a visit to the Six Bells may be confidently recommended.

Prior to its rebuilding in the spring of 1904, the Cock, on Clapham Common, facing the pond in the direction of Clapham Old Town, was a quite celebrated local landmark, with an unbroken history of 325 years. Its smoke-room, of ample proportions, had a great ingle-nook reserved for a dozen debaters, which bore the name of "The House of Lords." Here many lively encounters took place among the "fathers of the village." They drank only grog. The demolition of the old house put an end to the debates, but the provision of a smoke-room in its successor still affords opportunity for an interchange of opinions on current topics. The saloon has a quaintness all its own, the windows being of stained glass set in small panes. As seen from across the Common, this snug little tavern, when lighted up after dusk, looks extremely picturesque.

Though not a vestige of the original Plough Inn, at the High Street corner of Clapham Common, specifically the first house comprising "The Pavement," exactly opposite Acre Lane, may be traced to-day, that having been consumed by fire rather more than a hundred years ago, the existing edifice, which rose upon its ashes, is a no less noted South London landmark. Generous food fare has always characterized this hostelry on the road to Epsom Downs. When, within living memory, Clapham was a mere village, the Plough asserted itself as the great rallying-point for a jaunt to the Derby Races, and, ordinarily, as the objective of a Sunday outing. The decline of the suburban tea-gardens and bun-houses made for the manifest advantage of this semi-rural inn, since all its successive landlords set great store on laying in a stock of provisions for holiday visitors. Now that Clapham has grown to be an integral portion of London, or, rather, since the Transpontine districts have extended themselves to the skirts of Clapham Common, the catering for a vast community round about, and particularly for town travellers calling upon its shopkeepers, conduces to make the Plough one of the busiest tavern-restaurants in the South Metropolitan area.

It may here be observed incidentally that at No. 5 The Pavement, until the year 1818, dwelt the parents of Thomas Babington Macaulay, and just across the strip of green, close to what is now the Clapham Free Library, the future historian attended school. On the front garden of the still existing house, as happened to all its neighbours, a shop was afterwards built. This literary association seems to have escaped the knowledge of those responsible for the affixing of memorial plaques on the residences of England's worthies.

The Falcon Hotel, at the foot of St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction, is by far the most important landmark south of what formerly bore the name of Clapham Old Town. Its history carries us back to that not very remote period when, like Stockwell and

Clapham Road, Lavender Hill, East Hill, Wandsworth (watered by the river Wandle) and Putney were open country. Some idea of the modern absorption of outlying villages in the "Great Wen" of London may be gathered from a survey of the triple stained-glass window in the saloon of the Falcon, which depicts the rurality of the scene, with people drinking and dancing beneath tall trees outside "The Dean's Door"—why so called local tradition does not explain—1801. To the right and left of this ancient view of the hostelry are those of the squarely built fabric brought into line with the street pavement in the year 1833, and the present one, which supplanted it in 1887.

Historic memories must ever cling to the Queen's Head, at the corner of the narrow street named after it, in Essex Road, Islington. The picturesque inn, with a quaint massive porch and overhanging stories of great windows, which made way for the one now seen in the year 1829, was the very first of the many round the country at large displaying a portrait of his royal mistress that owed their origin to Sir Walter Raleigh. When newly returned from Virginia, the introducer of the tobacco leaf into these realms had a patent granted to him "to make lycences for keeping of taverns and retayling of wynes throughout England." At once he converted the summer residence of Queen Elizabeth's favourite, the Earl of Essex, into a house of accommodation for man and beast. As proved by two carved lions, the supporters of the Cecil arms on the frontage of a tenement down the yard, this had previously been the mansion of Lord Treasurer Burleigh. Thomas Cure, saddler to Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, was also known to have dwelt here.

If Sir Walter Raleigh did not actually take up his abode at the Islington Queen's Head, he certainly frequented it. In the great bay window, we are told,

> At his hours of leisure
> He'd puff his pipe and take his pleasure.

Under the unique stuccoed ceiling which still crowns the saloon he blew those tobacco clouds that caused the "drawer" (some say his own servant) to put out the imagined fire by pouring a pailful of water over him. The private room adjoining, known as "Queen Elizabeth's Parlour," is panelled in dark oak and contains a rare old fire-grate, with a magnificently carved mantelpiece surmounted by a bust of "Good Queen Bess." These relics were bought in at the sale of building materials when the original structure came to be demolished. For more than three centuries it had withstood the ravages of Time. The mantelpiece alone fetched £63. The stone slab immediately over the fire-place illustrates the stories of Danaë and Actæon in relief, with mutilated figures of Venus, Bacchus and Plenty. In this antiquarian treasure the present landlord takes great pride. The aforesaid ceiling, which, with infinite care, was taken from the ancient house and incorporated in the new one, is a very perfect example of Tudor domestic adornment. It displays dolphins, cherubs, acorns, fruits and foliage. The centrepiece consists of a medallion of some Roman personage and a small shield bearing the letters "I.M." surrounded by Cherubim and Glory. This ceiling extends over the saloon and the private room. A large oil painting of the Old Queen's Head likewise offers the visitor from afar something to while away the time over.

Yet another interesting fact remains to be noted. Stage-plays were regularly performed by a company of comedians at the Queen's Head, Islington, not in the inn yard, but in a long room. The price of admission to the "pit" was two shillings and to the gallery one shilling. A bill still extant of the reign of George II gives the caste of a tragedy, *The Fair Penitent*, and a farce, *The Lying Valet.* The play always began at seven o'clock. Hither often came Little Quick, a favourite actor of George III, to drink cold punch and chat about things theatrical. Charles Lamb, when he lived in Colebrook Row, Islington, spent most of his spare evenings at the Old Queen's Head. Long before the advent of omnibuses in London, a coach drawn by two horses ran twice a day from here to St. Paul's Churchyard at the then reasonable charge of two shillings per passenger.

A propos of suburban stage-plays in olden times, a stranger finding himself in the Lower Road, Rotherhithe, could not fail to be struck by the singularity of a tavern sign there—China Hall. He might opine, like the majority of good, easy folk in the district, that the proximity of this fully licensed rendezvous to the Thames had in former days some connection with the Chinese Colony, which afterwards migrated across to Limehouse, the more so if his acquaintance with London history enabled him to recollect that the very first dock was constructed at Rotherhithe. Such a mental shot would, however, be wide of the mark.

More historic than even antiquaries are aware, what remains to us of China Hall was the tavern approach to a riparian playhouse visited by Pepys and mentioned in his *Diary*. Down to the Regency, at least, persons of quality often preferred the entertainments of the East End to those nearer home, on account of a pleasant trip beyond the Tower with a jolly young waterman plying the oars. The gossiping diarist is not specially informative as to the playhouse or its frequenters towards the eastern limits of London in his day, therefore we are left to assume that it must have been a summer theatre, and, judging from its title, porcelain or chinaware embellishments gave it a distinctive character. How long the place continued to be a theatre after his death none can say. After having degenerated into a paper warehouse, a fresh effort was apparently made to attract fashionable audiences to China Hall during the summer of 1777. The admission charges were then three shillings to the boxes, two shillings to the pit, and one shilling to the gallery. The time of commencing the performance varied according to the season, but was never later than seven o'clock. *The Wonder*, *Love in a Village*, *The Lying Valet* and *The Commercial Courtship* were among the stock pieces drawn upon. The famous George Frederick Cooke was a bright particular star there in 1778. During the autumn of that year the theatre suffered the fate of most similar resorts, and it never had a successor. Thereafter China Hall, as seen from the Lower Road, served merely as the entrance to some pleasant tea-gardens, with the usual arbours and "boxes." Old inhabitants of Rotherhithe still speak about them and the great verandah attached to the rear wall of the existing tavern. These were utterly effaced by the utilization of the ground for a timber-yard, which to-day stretches down to the Surrey Commercial Docks. Like his predecessors, the present licensee of China Hall can converse glibly on the historic associations of the place, and loses no opportunity of assuring interested visitors that pigtailed Chinamen never had anything to do with it.

Returning to North London and following up the subject of public conveyances, the Yorkshire Stingo, at the western extremity of Marylebone Road, was once a most important landmark. From this spot the earliest omnibuses were run to the City and back, the fare being a shilling, which included the loan of a newspaper. They bore the name of "Shillibeers," after the bold spirit who introduced them. Born in Tottenham Court Road, 1791, and having served an apprenticeship to a Long Acre coachbuilder, this worthy went to Paris for the purpose of enlarging his knowledge and eventually setting up business for himself. In the year 1827 M. Lafitte, the banker, conceived the idea of adapting a primitive style of hospital ambulance to the needs of the general public, and gave him an order for two improved "Omnibuses." Shillibeer executed the contract and had the satisfaction of seeing these vehicles ply the streets of the city the live-long day. They were constructed to carry eighteen passengers inside, with only the driver on the top and the conductor behind.

Having witnessed the successful inauguration of the omnibus system on the banks of the Seine, Shillibeer bethought himself of profiting by the like enterprise in London. He sold his business and recrossed the Channel. On April 3, 1829, he addressed a memorial to John Thornton, Chairman of the Board of Stamps, announcing his intention of running two omnibuses along the Paddington or New Road. That was the first time the now familiar term had been used in England. After the lapse of three months, viz. on July 4th, the appearance of a cumbrous vehicle with three bay horses drawn up outside the Yorkshire Stingo created immense public interest. Its full complement of twenty-two passengers—an improvement upon the Parisian model—inside was at once secured, while the jog-trot progress to the Bank called forth acclamations of wonder.

This public-spirited venture realized every expectation. Within nine months Shillibeer had a dozen omnibuses running on different routes. These held possession of the road until the London General Omnibus Company established regular services all over the Metropolis on January 7, 1856. Their buses were small, with a floor-lining of straw; they had a seat on each side of the driver, who graciously held out a stout strap for passengers to clamber up by; a couple of perfectly perpendicular ladders, affording difficult access from the "monkey board" (so called because the conductor was always capering about on it) behind to the roof; and a door, on the inner side of which a flickering oil-lamp was suspended beside the way-bill. The subsequent formation of the London Road Car Company brought about a marked improvement in the construction of these vehicles, whereby the decorative sex can nowadays mount to the roof with the utmost convenience.

Down to the middle of the last century the Yorkshire Stingo had its own tea-gardens at the rear. Sundays were a very busy time for waiters and serving-maids at this suburban retreat. Therefore one cannot wonder that Shillibeer (who afterwards received a Government grant of £5,000, and on setting up an undertaker's business patented a new kind of hearse) scented profit in conveying passengers to and from the Yorkshire Stingo by the three-horse machine when no other means of locomotion for ordinary people had been devised. The brewery built on the site of the gardens is now a Church Army Labour Home.

Another old-time *alfresco* resort for jaded Londoners has been replaced by a modern hostelry, the Adam and Eve, at the corner of the Euston and Hampstead Roads. Always a noted landmark since the coaching days, the original, demolished in the year 1832, was identified with the Adam and Eve Tea Gardens that had their beginnings in the ancient manor-house of the Lords of Totten Hall, or, as some historians say, Totten Court, to which our Tottenham Court Road owes its name. In the spacious grounds, where holiday-makers from the crowded City ate cakes and cream and drank tea, could still be seen the ruins of the Elizabethan mansion, as well as those of a reputed palace of King John. Here Lunardi touched Mother Earth after his unsuccessful attempt to navigate the air from the Artillery Ground, Moorfields, on May 16, 1783. The long room of the Adam and Eve had an organ, and much appreciated was the music until, the place degenerating into a Casino, the magistrates ordered the removal of the instrument. Subsequently it became Broughton's Amphitheatre for Boxing, which title figured on the Adam and Eve signboard. A faithful representation of the old corner-house appears in Hogarth's picture "The March to Finchley," since this was the first halt of the City Train Bands—the Volunteers of the period—for the Bald Faced Stag at East Finchley. A copy of the original, now in the Foundling Hospital, adorns the saloon. Eden Street now covers the site of the Adam and Eve Tea Gardens.

An equally important North London landmark is the Mother Red Cap at Camden Town. This, the "Half Way House to Hampstead" in the days when the whole district round about was open fields, perpetuates the memory of a reputed witch in league with the Devil, whose hovel stood on the spot during the reign of the Merry Monarch. A bust of "Mother Damnable," as the populace called her, surmounts the present stately tavern-restaurant, which, in the Seventies of the nineteenth century, succeeded the wayside inn that had from time out of mind attracted pleasure-seekers to its extensive tea-gardens. The first Mother Red Cap came into existence soon after the death of the witch. A print of the inn shows a huge signpost with a painted representation of her dangling from it. Close by was a gibbet. This drew to the cross-roads a howling, seething mass of humanity on "Hanging Mondays," pursuant to the Home Secretary's order in the year 1776 that all criminals convicted on the capital charge at the Old Bailey should be executed outside the Mother Red Cap. The removal of the "fatal tree" robbed the inn of its sinister *alfresco* attractions, but the sipping of tea in rude "boxes" and summer arbours behind the antiquated structure and its immediate successor, built in 1850, made the "Half Way House to Hampstead" a popular holiday resort. Now, alas! such semi-rural pleasures must be sought on Hampstead's breezy heights themselves. As we view it to-day, the Mother Red Cap is far-famed for festive gatherings beneath the actual roof-tree.

Although it is known that Tyburn had been the place of execution for notorious criminals for centuries, there was certainly another, possibly reserved for sheep-stealers and those whose crimes did not entitle them to figure in the "Newgate Calendar," at the north end of High Street, Bloomsbury, just beyond the parish church of St. Giles's in the Fields. This circumstantially gave the name of The Bowl to an unpretentious tavern adjoining the churchyard, where The Angel, built in 1873, now stands. At its door the occupant of the "fatal cart," whatever his destination (see *ante*, p. 25) received a bowl of ale. Originally a kind act on the part of the tavern-keeper, his last drink within view of the gallows became in process of time the prescriptive right of the condemned man. And one doubts not that the excited mob following the dismal cortège regaled itself also during the halt. The wide passage leading to the saloon of the modern house and a garage maintains the tradition under the name of Bowl Yard, much though the fresh sign of the rebuilt Bowl has contributed to efface the memory of public executions in St. Giles's parish.

As a rule, despite the rebuilding of time-honoured inns and taverns, their traditions survive. Go where one will, the oldest inhabitant can tell us something interesting about a local landmark which, so far as the original fabric is concerned, exists only in name. Literary and historic memories cling to many a "house of call" replete with every factor of modern comfort and attractiveness. Relative to this statement, a walk from the City to the Northern Heights of London might yield the utmost satisfaction to an ingenious snapper up of unconsidered trifles. Hence the following brief topographical survey.

The Cross Keys, 16 St. John's Street, Clerkenwell, close to Smithfield Meat Market, was the regular haunt of Richard Savage, that unfortunate child of genius whom Dr. Johnson befriended and immortalized by publishing his *Life*. It was while pressing his necessities upon Cave, founder of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, at St. John's Gate, that the poet first attracted the notice of the future lexicographer; and as both were equally poor at the time, they claimed that kinship which "sticketh closer than a brother." At the Baptist's Head, 30 St. John's Lane, where the ancient Gate itself stands, Goldsmith and the Doctor were frequent visitors during the same period. Towards the northern extremity of St. John's Road, a short distance from the meeting of four ways, is, or rather was, the Old Red Lion, now better known as "Snow's." Here lived Tom Paine, the author of *The Rights of Man*, and in its snug parlour Dr. Johnson sometimes entertained a little coterie of friends with his inimitable table-talk. A regular dropper-in, too, was James Thomson, of *The Seasons* celebrity.

Associations of a different kind belong to the neighbouring New Clown, on the north bank of the New River, now covered over for the making of Rosebery Avenue. When this bore the name of the Clown Tavern, its successive landlords, after the death of Joseph Grimaldi, were the motley leaders of the harlequinade at Sadler's Wells Theatre. In Pentonville, almost within a stone's-throw of his last resting-place, stands the Marquis of Cornwallis, specifically at 23 Collier Street, where Grimaldi himself, when old and broken down, used to come nightly from 53 Southampton Street for a glass of good liquor. Though his wit never deserted him, he was so feeble that the landlord, a kindly man named Cook, always bore him on his back to and fro. May 31, 1837, was the date of the famous clown's last visit to the parlour of the Marquis of Cornwallis. When Mr. Cook called for him at home the next night, his spirit had passed away.

Rebuilt as an ordinary tavern in 1876, the Belvidere, at the corner of Penton Street, preserves the memory of a North London pleasure-garden famed for dahlia shows and racquet court games. Originally styled "Busby's Folly," this derived its sign from a small structure on the roof for sitting under and enjoying the fine prospect across the fields, the Italian term "Belvidere" being equally applicable to a summer arbour or a pergola on a housetop. A large view of the old house and its gardens presents itself in the passage-way to the saloon. Within our own time the Saturday night Debates at the Belvidere Tavern were extremely popular, and scarcely less renowned than those of Cogers' Hall, in the City. A similar resort for *alfresco* delights in the immediate vicinity was White Conduit House, where Oliver Goldsmith very often made "a shoemaker's holiday," and City clerks with their sweethearts were wont to wander on Sundays amid cowslips, violets, dog-roses and similar suggestions of rural felicity. At the Bagnigge Wells, 39 King's Cross Road, again, the entertainment was of old very much akin to that provided at Sadler's Music House, which eventually became a regular theatre.

Traversing the long stretch of the Upper Street from the Angel to Highbury Corner, one cannot but think that the multiplicity of its inns and taverns had no small bearing upon the tenacity of the place-name "Merrie Islington." They all have a story to tell. As he writes about it himself, the White Lion was once visited by Pepys to see a friend who had been brought round from drowning in its pond by having pigeons placed to his feet. On the site of the Pied Bull, at Theberton Street corner, stood the town mansion of Sir Walter Raleigh after he had settled down in Islington. Even more historic is the Pied Bull, half way up Holloway Road on the City side of the G.N.R. Station. Here the first instance of the spread of the Plague from London to Islington was discovered; for a merchant stricken with it whilst awaiting the early morning stage for York, after engaging a bed, was found dead in his chamber. The maid quickly caught the infection and communicated it to others. Both the Pied Bull and the Nag's Head were struck by lightning and burned down during the Sixties of the last century.

A short distance from the foot of Highgate Hill is the Mother Red Cap, where Catesby and his fellow-conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot stopped to take refreshment on the way to witness the blowing up of the Houses of Parliament by Guy Fawkes—a scheme which fortunately failed. The exact spot where they stood for this purpose was the back entrance to the Old Spotted Dog, a now vanished hostelry at the hill-top opposite the Old Crown Tea Gardens. The Whittington Stone and the Whittington and His Cat, on Highgate Hill, keep alive the tradition of the run-away City 'prentice who, falling asleep on the identical milestone outside the first-named tavern, heard the bells of Bow Church recall him, and as time wore on became a famous citizen, thrice Lord Mayor of London. Finally, the Lion, at the corner of Junction Road, was the second halting-place of the City Train Bands on the March to Finchley; here, also, as at the Adam and Eve and the Bald Faced Stag, a copy of Hogarth's well-known painting hangs in the saloon.

Reverting to bygone suburban resorts, it would be quite unpardonable if no mention were made in these pages of the Hornsey Wood Tavern, at the corner of Alexandra Road and Seven Sisters Road, Finsbury Park. Its title suggests woodland pleasures, which must now be sought very far afield. Well within the recollection of many Londoners who have witnessed Time's changes in the course of fifty years, this conspicuous landmark and recognized centre of social life took the place of a popular holiday haunt, embracing a large concert-room, extensive tea-gardens, and a sheet of ornamental water for boating and fishing, which was swept away by the laying out of Finsbury Park in the year 1866. Prior to that ambitious project for a public recreation ground and promenade to afford breathing-space for the denizens of the Parliamentary

Borough of Finsbury—hence its name—Hornsey Wood extended a considerable distance south of the Old Sluice House in Blackstock Road. Between this and the Hornsey Wood House was another popular rendezvous, the Eel Pie House, of which no trace remains to-day. After surveying the primitive waterworks at the first named (now an ordinary "house of call"), holiday-makers of the humbler sort usually made a meal of eel-pies *en route* for the tavern, where divers amusements awaited them. In course of time the Hornsey Wood House attracted superior folk from all parts for pigeon-shooting, bowls and tennis. As a matter of fact, this was the only place of its kind in the entire parish of Hornsey. Anciently the Bishop of London had a palace and park at Hornsey, and his retainers formed a community of their own in the little forest hamlet of Harringay. Utterly vanished nowadays have all evidences of this vast umbrageous domain, though Wood Green bespeaks its northern extremity and the Hornsey Wood Tavern bygone junketings.

The origin of this stately corner edifice takes us back more than a hundred years, when Hornsey Wood House was the humble dwelling of two elderly sisters—Mrs. Lloyd and Mrs. Collier—with widespreading oaks in front of it, offering new milk, home-made cakes and tea to jaded wayfarers who sought rest and refreshment. In his *Every Day Book* (*temp.* 1826), William Hone tells us that outside their rustic door these venerable and cheerful dames related many a tale of their life-history to willing listeners, until, in very old age, one of them passed away, and the other followed within a few months. According to prints of this secluded domicile still extant, it must have been an extremely pleasant summer retreat for toilers "in crowded city pent." Soon after the death of the widowed sisters, Hornsey Wood House was razed to the ground, and the more pretentious hostelry, invested with a full drink and entertainment licence, though somewhat less retired in regard to surroundings, succeeded in its aspirations of drawing rank and fashion from the West End. In our day Hurlingham and Ranelagh have, of course, asserted themselves as places of greater note. Nevertheless, it can be stated without fear of contradiction that the Hornsey Wood Tavern houses more clubs and societies than any similar establishment in North London, there being not a single week-night without something taking place in its four large upper rooms. This is proved by the substantial pile of hand-painted title slips which are by turn inserted each day in a glass-facia announcement sign beside the saloon entrance.

Concerning the Manor House Tavern, at the meeting of four ways opposite the Green Lanes entrance to Finsbury Park, there is really nothing to be said in amplification of the large gold lettering on its side wall to the effect that Queen Victoria alighted here on October 25, 1843. In providing a great ballroom the first landlord's idea was doubtless to set up a counter-attraction to the Hornsey Wood Tavern. This has latterly been converted into a restful and sumptuously appointed lounge, where high-class orchestral concerts draw music-lovers from near and afar off.

Even in modern times Kentish Town Road was not always the populous thoroughfare that we now survey. Half a century ago it contained a tollgate and but four habitations, each given up to public refreshment, viz. the King's Arms, the Castle, the Jolly Anglers and the Assembly House. All the rest was a meandering country lane, with frowsy kine gazing over the hedgerows at the occasional wayfarer between Highgate Village and the Mother Red Cap at Camden Town. As an inn or tavern sign the Assembly House is altogether unique, since none other than that adjoining the Midland Railway Station, Kentish Town, exists, or ever has existed, in the Metropolitan area. And thereby hangs a tale!

While both the King's Arms and the Castle, with ample forecourts, ordinarily attracted carters and drovers of an agricultural type, and the Jolly Anglers, at the corner of Anglers' Lane, patient disciples of Izaac Walton, the Assembly House was a long wooden building with bay windows and an exterior covered stairway, specially designed for the entertainment of cits and their wives, who came up in lumbering coaches from the haunts of Mammon to play at bowls and drink tea in its spacious grounds. These were the original attractions of the wayside resort, but as time wore on others contributed to convert it into a Cockney Almack's, lavishly illuminated after nightfall. With concerts and dances and feasting galore, the Assembly House had an extraordinary vogue for upwards of a hundred years. Such prestige, indeed, attached to it that, according to a print of 1750, a large signboard near the roof set forth the more comprehensive title "Assembly Rooms."

Some idea of the catering may be gathered from an advertisement in the public journals for 1788, when the place was taken over by a fresh licensee. After informing the public in general that he has laid in a choice assortment of liquors of every description, Thomas Wood calls attention to the following:

> Dinners for publick societies or private parties dressed on the shortest notice. Tea, coffee, etc., morning and evening. A good trap-ball ground, pleasure summer-house, extensive gardens, and every other

accommodation for the convenience of those who may think proper to make an excursion to the above house during the summer months. A good Ordinary on Sundays at two o'clock.

In a later print of the famous rendezvous, dated 1790, it again appears under the style of the "Assembly House," which it has borne ever since. Immediately opposite, by the roadside, there stood a tall elm-tree, beneath the spreading branches of which was a marble oval-shaped table, thus inscribed round the edge in Latin : "In commemoration of restored health, Robert Wright, Gent., has placed this marble. In the year of Our Lord 1725. To God, the Best and Greatest." The utmost diligence on the part of local antiquaries has failed to elicit any information regarding this worthy. We do, however, learn that the tree was struck down by lightning in the year 1849, after which the cryptic characters on the fully exposed table proved a sore puzzle to passers-by. It is highly gratifying to find this interesting memorial preserved in the saloon of the Assembly House, together with various prints and an oil painting from the brush of Walter Crane of the ancient building. As a matter of fact, the famous artist obtained possession of the table and presented it to the landlord of the newly built tavern in the year 1898. True to its traditions, the Assembly House has all along purveyed excellent food fare. Alluring features of the large billiard-room are Hogarth prints and Vanity Fair cartoons.

Much more than the Horse Shoe Hotel and the gateway to Meux's Brewery at the south-east extremity of Tottenham Court Road does the Oxford Music Hall (now a regular theatre) merit the description of a great London landmark. For whereas the former merely displaced an aggregation of mean dwellings originally facing the St. Giles's pound and gibbet, the latter occupies the site of an ancient inn, the Boar and Castle, which subsequently became an important posting-house, with tea and pleasure gardens attached thereto. In support of this statement, an encaustic tile painting of the old place appears on the left-hand wall of the street entrance to the saloon. The date affixed to it is 1645, but records prove the Boar and Castle to have stood here five-and-twenty years before. This fine old galleried hostelry of the traditional kind had a great courtyard, the entrance to which may be located by the present approach to the stalls, and under its hospitable roof nightly entertainments were provided for travellers and the population of the rapidly growing district. While in front was the busy Oxford Road, with carriers, pack-horses and stage-coaches, its rear windows afforded a pleasant view of open country. On this spot Mr. Charles Morton built the Oxford Music Hall, and functionally inaugurated it with a magnificent vocal programme on March 26, 1861. Measuring 94 feet by 44 feet and attaining a height of 41 feet, the auditorium was considered to be the finest in London. An ingenious lighting arrangement consisted of twenty-eight crystal stars, but this afterwards came to be superseded by four large chandeliers suspended from the roof. For a number of years the hospitable traditions of the Boar and Castle were ably maintained by the serving of suppers until one o'clock in the morning.

True enough, Music Halls are not what they were. The variety theatre is a latter-day institution. Music, and the best of talent to supply it, was of old the staple attraction. Those amongst us who can remember Evans's Supper Rooms must lament the ascendancy of the red-nosed comedians with bashed hats, baggy trousers and pawky umbrellas over the high-class vocalization of the vanished past. When the Lion Comique came into fashion there was at least a rousing chorus to exercise his auditors' lungs. At the Oxford, the Canterbury and the London Pavilion the "Great Vance," George Leybourne, Arthur Lloyd, "Jolly" John Nash and Fred Albert often appeared in the same programme. Poor George Leybourne! To his dying day he allowed a consumptive young fellow—a perfect stranger to him—a pound a week out of his earnings, which were anything but princely. At that time comic singers held engagements at one hall for three months, though new songs were not always forthcoming.

A view of the Oxford Music Hall during the high old times of the Sixties shows a stage, or rather a concert platform, perfectly consonant with the architectural design of the auditorium. Mirrors, columns and statuary are much in evidence. A harp appears on one side of the draped opening in the centre and a double-bass on the other. Hence it will be seen that something akin to chamber music relieved the vocalization. In the extreme corners, just under the balcony ends, a grand piano and a harmonium represent the "orchestra." Close to the footlights is a violin soloist, while down below sits the all-important Chairman. Tables ranged lengthwise along the floor of the hall have waiters in attendance. The quaint bonnets of the ladies and the Dundreary whiskers of the "gents" strike one as peculiar. The Oxford of to-day, opened in August 1893, is the fourth built on the site of the Boar and Castle Inn. The Canterbury was, however, the earliest London Music Hall. This, too, owed its establishment to the late Charles Morton, way back in the year 1848.

Though not so regarded nowadays, since a monstrous railway bridge screens it from the Thames-side view, the street-front successor of the Canterbury Arms, which forms the approach to the Theatre of Varieties, was formerly a most important South London landmark. This is truly historic ground. At the ancient inn and ferry-house Canterbury Pilgrims were wont to assemble and disperse, while all visitors from abroad *via* the South Coast to Westminster Abbey halted here for refreshment before crossing the river. After the Reformation the inn ceased to have any ecclesiastical significance, but the episcopal signboard still swayed and creaked with the wind. An engraving of the old place, *temp.* 1816, shows a willow-tree standing outside its porch and a babbling stream close by.

When, during the autumn of the year 1848, Mr. Charles Morton took over the Canterbury Arms, he ran Saturday concerts in its large room at the rear. Admission to these was free. They proved so beneficial to the "house" that his artistes very soon appeared on Thursday evenings also. A year afterwards he built the first Canterbury Hall to accommodate seven hundred persons on the site of the bowling-green and skittle-alley. It had no stage, but a platform. John Caulfield acted as Chairman, and Mr. Jonghmanns was the conductor. His salary list for nightly performances fell little short of thirty pounds a week. Among the artistes were August Braham, son of the celebrated tenor, Miss Turpin (afterwards Mrs. Henry Wallack) and Miss Russell, niece of the popular-song composer. The last-named subsequently leapt into fame by creating the chief *rôles* in Offenbach's operas, and was the original Marguerite in Gounod's *Faust* in England. Here, too, Miss Emily Soldene made her first public appearance. For many years operatic selections and English ballads constituted the staple entertainment.

The earliest comedians who made their mark at the Canterbury were Sam Cowell and Mackney, the negro impersonator. The former died in the year 1866, and it is noteworthy that Miss Braddon, who was just then coming to the front as a novelist, wrote some special verses for recital at the benefit performance on behalf of his family. Long before this event the hall had proved utterly inadequate for the regular patronage. On May 17, 1852, Mr. Morton opened the present Canterbury Music Hall. In connection with it he set up a picture-gallery which *Punch* facetiously designated "The Royal Academy over the Water." He also provided the auditorium with a sliding roof, the first ever heard of in England. On a memorable summer night this much-advertised mechanical contrivance failed to work, in consequence of which all the occupants of the pit who did not rush into the picture-gallery for shelter received the full force of a drenching shower.

When "The Father of the Halls" seceded from the Canterbury to build the Oxford Music Hall, he gave up the reins of management to William Holland, a showman of an altogether different stamp. This worthy, self-styled "The People's Caterer," completely transformed the place, and substituted comic singing and variety acts for the operatic and ballad vocalization. Until then, acrobats, trapezists, jugglers and contortionists had appeared only in circuses and gala grounds. He it was who introduced serio-comic "sisters" and mixed "turns" on the boards. To him also we are indebted for the present-day aspect of the variety theatre stage, with a proscenium, drop curtain (or plush "tabs") and scenery.

One of "Bill" Holland's first booms was to engage George Leybourne, whom he had discovered and styled "The Lion Comique," to appear exclusively at the

Canterbury for a year at the then phenomenal salary of twenty pounds a week. Yet another of his discoveries was "The Great Vance," who, for Advertisement's Artful Aid, rode round the West End by day in a hired carriage and pair. Next, Edwin Villiers took over the hall and made further changes. Gorgeous ballets, antedating those at the Alhambra, began to attract all the "young bloods" of the Town—even Royalty. The late King Edward VII, as Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cambridge and the Duke and Duchess of Teck were acknowledged patrons of the Canterbury Theatre of Varieties. And what an array of vocal talent the new impresario brought together! A programme for September 1876 includes the names of such notabilities as the Great Vance, George Leybourne, Fred Coyne, Pat Feeney, Arthur Roberts, James Fawn, the elder Randall, Nellie Power and Phyllis Broughton.

William Randall and his wife appeared as duettists and duologue artists with the utmost success until, too zealously safeguarding "legitimate" rights, the Lord Chamberlain forbade two speaking performers occupying the stage together. Already, then, the Music Hall was beginning to be hampered by vexatious restrictions, which in our own day culminated in the petty "Sketch prosecutions," just as the Grecian and Britannia "Saloons," though licensed theatres, were at one time denied the right of presenting Shakespeare's plays in opposition to the Theatres Royal.

With the migration of Mr. Villiers to the London Pavilion, the popularity of the Canterbury commenced to decline. A later lessee was John Baum, who abolished the hot suppers served in the auditorium, but still clung to ballet productions as his chief attraction. When he, too, gave up its management, nothing more was heard of him until he fell under the ban of the law for presenting a pantomime at the Connaught (afterwards the Holborn) Theatre, and now the Holborn Stadium, without the Lord Chamberlain's licensing certificate. During its last tenure of music-hall activity, the Canterbury was run by Messrs. Crowder and Payne in combination with the Paragon, Mile End Road, E., two private omnibuses being requisitioned for the conveyance of the same artistes from one hall to the other. A spirited attempt to popularize the "twice nightly show" at these places proved a dismal failure.

Saturday evening, June 1, 1912, witnessed the "passing" of the long-established entertainment at the Canterbury. An "All-Star" programme was submitted and enthusiasm ran high. Everyone of note in the variety world who had been associated with the place in more prosperous days did something to make the event ever memorable. When, anon, the "tabs" had descended upon the final "turn," an extended licence permitted of a grand reunion of celebrities in the saloon. Down to about fifteen years ago, ere the "twice-nightly show" put an end to their appearance at different widely distant halls, the Canterbury Lounge was the recognized after-business-hours haunt of variety artistes, the majority of whom lived in "diggings" at Kennington and Brixton. Close on the stroke of midnight their hired broughams would line the pavement whilst they were carousing within. Now the more affluent of their species have villas at Bedford Park, Chiswick, or rent expensive flats in the West End. Accordingly, the Westminster Bridge Road for "glasses all round" knows them no longer. After remaining closed a considerable time, the Canterbury seems to have taken up a fresh lease of popularity with Pictures and Varieties. If, in the foregoing, undue space has been devoted to one subject, it is because the younger generation of amusement-seekers wots not of those influences which called the modern variety theatre into being.

It may surprise many Londoners to learn that the south-east corner of Piccadilly Circus was once a noted West End landmark. Preceding all others round the Town of the palatial order, the Criterion Restaurant, opened March 21, 1874, embraces a theatre built entirely underground. Probably, had the London County Council then exercised authority, the plans for such a constructive novelty would never have been approved. This composite edifice took the place of a great coaching-house, surmounted by a life-size figure of a white bear that now nestles amid foliage in the front garden of a pretty little wayside inn at Fairchildes, between Purley and Keston, in Kent. Returning for a moment to the Horse Shoe Hotel, Tottenham Court Road, which has often been discussed as a suitable site for a theatre, this took its title from the horseshoes originally nailed up for luck at the gateway entrance to Meux's Brewery. Gilt horseshoes are conspicuous on the trappings of all the drayhorses, and, in fact, they constitute the firm's trade-mark. Incidentally, too, it may be stated that the Frascati Restaurant, Oxford Street—the first in London to feature a Conservatory or Winter Garden—came into existence through a clearing of its site for the late Wilson Barrett's new and very own theatre, which was never built.

Way down Empress Street, off the Walworth Road, S.E., where Sir William Walworth, who slew the rebel Wat Tyler, had his landed estate, is the Montpelier Picture and Variety Palace, which originally belonged to the Montpelier Tea Gardens. This has passed through the successive stages of a Casino, a Concert Hall, a Ballroom and a Music Hall. For many years now, motion pictures, leavened by a couple of variety turns, have brought much grist to the showman's mill. The seats number nine hundred, and but few lack occupants when the long nightly show commences. The decorations of "The Mont," by which term the place is locally known, are distinctive. Instead of painted scenery the stage has a permanent fibrous plaster "palace set," with a great crystal chandelier, while the auditorium walls make believe to enclose a huge conservatory.

Many of our old-established Cinemas were originally chapels, albeit in no single case has a place of worship belonging to the Church of England undergone such a conversion. The Electric Theatre in Walworth Road, which contains one thousand seats, was the Old Sutherland Chapel, and there are tombstones still set against its north wall. Again, frequenters of the Praed Street Electric Theatre, a few doors from Edgware Road, little suspect that the baptismal well of the Old Paddington Chapel remains undisturbed beneath the auditorium. The Old King's Hall, in Commercial Road, E., was prior to the year 1898, and has latterly again been, since the lapse of its cinema licence, used for Jewish wedding festivities. Large Biblical paintings on the walls possess great interest. The ceiling is of polished oak, and the entrance corridor very attractive.

Hanover Hall, close to Kennington Oval Tube Station, and facing the parish church, which covers the site of the ancient gallows for South London, is in a sense historic. To some of us oldsters it conjures up recollections of the famous Hanover Rooms, of which the adjoining Greyhound Tavern then formed part, whither the "bucks" and "bloods" and their "light o' loves" of Early Victorian days were whisked off in cabs (or they could walk the comparatively short distance of Harleyford Road), after the closing of Vauxhall Gardens, for the mazy dance until the milkman's morning round. These nocturnal revels survived the final closing down of the Gardens on July 25, 1859, and were only put an end to by the total suppression of the "Night Houses" during the Seventies. The original floor remains intact, but the conversion of Hanover Hall into a cinema necessitated the laying down of a new one over it with a pronounced "rake."

All the Mid and Late Victorian music-halls have marched with the times and wholly changed their character. Included in this category are the Star, Bermondsey; Gatti's in Westminster Bridge Road and "Gatti's-under-the-Arches" in Villiers Street, Strand; the Canterbury (as we have already noted); the Royal Cambridge, Commercial Street, E.; the Paragon, Mile End Road; Barnard's (originally Crowther's) at Greenwich, and the Windsor at Plumstead. Structurally, not the slightest alteration has been made at these once famous resorts of the "gilded youth" who applauded the Lion Comique to the echo. Neither does the Seabright, in Gloucester Street, off South Hackney Road, look any different now to what it did when Miss Marie Lloyd gave a "trial show" on its stage and won for herself a week's engagement long years ago. The fact that this gifted artiste was born in the immediate vicinity may not be publicly known.

Most appropriately named is The Ring in Blackfriars Road. Devotees of "the noble art" who flock here to witness exhibition boxing on Saturday nights have possibly never heard tell that this was the Surrey Chapel, identified with half a century's ministerial labours of the Rev. Rowland Hill. His avowed object of setting up a circular place of worship was to afford the Devil no corner to lurk in. As now seen, with the exceptions of the covered entrance and an emergency stairway at one side, the fabric dates from the year 1783. Dying in 1833, he expressed a desire to be laid at rest under the pulpit, which was done, but his remains were subsequently removed to Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road. After standing empty for a long time, the Surrey Chapel found a secular use as a warehouse and showrooms for an engineering firm. Later it served a similar purpose for the display of wringers, garden engines, and other domestic appliances. The final conversion of the old edifice into a boxing "Ring" took place about ten years ago. *En passant*, a large ironmongery store close to the Blackfriars Bridge foot bears on its fanlight, and trades under, the name of "The Rotunda," which was that of a primitive "Admission by Refreshment Ticket" music-hall contemporaneous with the "Bower Saloon" in the Lower Marsh and others of the like description nowadays forgotten.

Not without a certain amount of antiquated picturesqueness, and occupying a much larger frontage than any hostelry round London, is the Horse and Groom, 60 Streatham High Road, S.W. Its predecessor, demolished in the year 1865, had for centuries been a noted wayside halting-place. After the Hanoverian succession it became a far-famed gaming and cock-fighting rendezvous. We are told in Huish's *Life of George IV* that the Prince Regent and his fellow-profligates, Colonel McMahon and Mr. Marable, were constant visitors, and at the Horse and Groom took place many of those orgies which tarnished the reputation of the future monarch. Pleasanter it is to associate the old hostelry with the Colossus of English Literature, Dr. Johnson. Whilst enjoying the charm of a rural retreat at Streatham Park, under the roof-tree of the Thrales, he could not resist the fascination of tavern life. Many an evening he spent at the Horse and Groom, entertaining its *habitués* with his table-talk, and when periodically Garrick, Goldsmith, Burke, Lyttleton and Dr. Burney graced the hospitable board of his dear friends, the whole company strode over to the inn for a parting glass. As an *alfresco* resort the Horse and Groom of to-day is known far and wide. Stretching rearwards to an altogether surprising extent, its grounds, illuminated after dusk, embrace tea-gardens, a bowling-green, two large tennis-courts and a *café-chantant* stage. Twice a week throughout the summer pierrot performances, and on Sunday evenings gramophone recitals, draw a goodly assemblage of local residents who like to take refreshment in the open air. Needless to add, the consumption of tea compares unfavourably with that of alcoholic beverages.

To assert that Greater London cannot boast of beer-gardens akin to those on the Continent would betray a wholesale disregard for those travel facilities now afforded to enlarge one's topographical knowledge. Such pleasurable public resorts are to be met with at the County Arms, Wandsworth, S.W.; the Golden Fleece, Manor Park, and the Cauliflower, Ilford, E. At the Royal Oak, Temple Fortune, midway between Golder's Green and North Finchley, N., the rustic arbours of tradition and dancing on the vernal sward, with refreshment-tables all around, have a great summer-tide vogue. Similar delights offer themselves at the Bull and Bush, Jack Straw's Castle and the Spaniards, Hampstead Heath. Unknown to the vast majority of Londoners not resident in the district, the Landor Hotel, in Landor Road, Stockwell, S.W., has an umbrageous retreat behind it; while that, likewise illuminated after dusk, at the Fox and Hounds, in Upper Richmond Road, Putney, possesses the advantage of orchestral music, which, in subdued tones, wells through the glass roof of the adjacent cinematograph theatre.

As a rule, our omnibus termini of a bygone day derived their names from famous hostelries and tea-gardens in connection therewith. The solitary exception will be found at what is now known as Seven Kings, on the eastern confines of the Metropolis, in Essex County. How this came into modern nomenclature affords instructive reading. A wealthy landed proprietor, who was responsible for the laying out of the Cranbrook and Valentine's Park estates, Ilford, last of all extended his building operations far beyond the Cauliflower Hotel, on the road to Goodmayes and Chadwell Heath. Reviving an ancient tradition, he, contemporaneous with breaking fresh ground and setting up a parade of shops, induced the Great Eastern Railway Company to plant a station there called Seven Kings. The Seven Kings Hotel, to which there is now a regular motor-bus service from Victoria, S.W., arose on its present site considerably less than twenty years ago. It did not displace a wayside inn or tavern, as strangers might opine. Until then there never had existed any licensed "house of call" between the Cauliflower at Ilford and the White Horse at Chadwell Heath.

Historic records brought under the notice of the pioneer builder on the Seven Kings estate prove conclusively that the Aldbrook, a little stream which meanders through the fields and past the old smithy, close to the modern hostelry, where the omnibuses line up for the return journey, lent enchantment to the view when the Saxon rulers during the Heptarchy held a conference on "the tented field" for the purpose of resisting the

Danes. Several sanguinary encounters with the red-haired marauders, who sailed up the Thames as far as Barking Creek, are written about in our history-books ; but not until Alfred the Great built a fleet and defeated them at sea, after the burning of Barking Abbey during the first year of his reign, were all fears of further invasion set at rest. A romantic side-issue of the meeting of the Seven Kings hereabouts was a duel fought for the hand of a fair lady by two princes, their horses being tethered to trees on the very spot where the hotel provides accommodation for man and beast within hail of the Aldbrook and its stepping-stones. It may be conveniently added that the River Roding, which runs into Barking Creek, had down to modern times to be forded ; hence its Saxon designation Eald or Auld Ford, meaning the Old Ford, and rendered by us Ilford. The like derivation applies to the East London district of Old Ford, beside the River Lea. Bow Bridge, by the way, was the first to be built on an arch, as copied from the Roman roadmakers. Seven Kings has not yet attained to the dignity of a separate local government.

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